

HEARING ON WOMEN'S EDUCATION: PROMOTING  
DEVELOPMENT, COUNTERING RADICALISM; AND  
MARKUP OF H.R. 3583, MALALA YOUSAFZAI  
SCHOLARSHIP ACT

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BEFORE THE  
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MALALA YOUSAFZAI SCHOLARSHIP ACT**

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**THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2014**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward Royce (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROYCE. This hearing will come to order. Today we are privileged to hear from three scholars on the topic of women's education and how a failure to appreciate its importance can result in missed opportunities for development and missed opportunities in terms of countering radicalism.

I remember my experience with a small school for a while. My wife and I served on the board of this school in Afghanistan and we had been asked all through those troubled years—this was before 9/11—to assist with this school for orphans.

It was in Kabul, and after the government changed after 9/11 I had an opportunity to go visit the school, and I well remember the feeling I had.

I could—they were in a building that, you know, obviously, needed a lot of work but the students you could hear them citing—you know, going through their lesson plan and one of the classes was in English.

The boys were on one side of the room and the girls were on the other, and the headmaster there asked me if I would like to ask any questions, and I remember asking specifically what these young people wanted to do when they grew up. A boy stood up and said he wanted to become an engineer.

But a girl stood up and said, I want to become a physician, and I said really, tell me, you know, what you would like to do. She said, I want to go to Kabul University. I want to become a doctor to help my people.

It was a reminder to look at those orphan children and see them being prepared but realizing how ill prepared most of the population was, going through those turbulent times of war.

Well, following today's hearing we are going to do a markup but we want to hear from our witnesses first. The markup is going to be on H.R. 3583, the Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act, and what

this important legislation will do is require USAID to award at least half of its scholarships in Pakistan to women and, of course, Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani, is the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize nominee who has been recognized for her courageous efforts to advance access to education for women and girls in that part of the world.

I also want to recognize the Pakistani-American community which has worked so hard from here in the United States to promote the education of safety and women—of women and girls by establishing and supporting schools. They also do a lot to support the medical schools in Pakistan, to support the orphanages and other medical centers and key institutions in Pakistan.

Despite a general expansion of educational opportunities around the world in the last 30 years, women in most developing countries on average still receive far less schooling than men, as we will hear from our witnesses today. In some countries like Pakistan this difference is quite pronounced with only about 40 percent of women over the age of 15 considered literate—40 percent for women, 70 percent for men. In Afghanistan, however, it is as few as 13 percent of women that are able to read and write. Today, we hope, as children are graduated out of school we are going to see that percentage increase markedly. But as you will hear today, there is strong evidence that the education of women and girls, of course, promotes economic growth, it increases life expectancy, it promotes childhood development.

There is no doubt that educating women improves a country's economy as educated women are more likely, obviously, to be able to contribute to the labor force. But the correlation between a rise in women's education and per capita income has been absolutely proven.

An increase in a woman's earning potential benefits her family. Studies have shown that women tend to invest more in their children than men, which is why increases in female income improve child survival rate some 20 times more than increases in male income. Women who can read also stand to benefit from the pamphlets distributed in public awareness campaigns and have been shown to better understand radio broadcasts designed to keep them informed.

Pakistan is an area of our concern here. Unfortunately, it is an area of our concern because of extremist groups that are indoctrinating youth by the thousands, and to offset this, of course, there are all-girl schools now in Pakistan being set up.

I visited one of them out in the Northwest Frontier only to learn later that that particular school had been destroyed by the Taliban. That should tell us all we need to know. Education is the key counter to destructive ideology.

As we will hear today, women's central role in families and communities make them uniquely positioned to intervene and to stop the radicalization of their children. Mothers are most likely to spot the signs that something is off. Simply put, if angry young men are to be stopped before they strap on a suicide vest, women will be key to stopping them.

It is also worrisome that, as one witness will warn, it is worrisome the soft radicalization of women and she will point to the

growing trend of women involved in terrorist attacks. Education has the potential to counter this, too.

We look forward to hearing from our witnesses on how women's education can play an important role in defusing the factors that contribute to extremism and how educating women and girls is a catalyst for economic development. As one journalist has put it, "Girls schools are just about the best long-term counter terrorism investment available."

I now turn to the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats, Mr. Keating from Massachusetts, for his opening comments.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ranking Member Engel was unable to attend this morning and I would like to ask the committee for unanimous consent to insert his opening statement for the record.

Chairman ROYCE. Without objection.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you. I want to extend my gratitude to Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel for their willingness to hold this important hearing and for their readiness to work with myself and other members of the committee in support of this timely topic, and I want to thank each of the witnesses for their testimony this morning.

I join the chairman and the members of the committee that are here to mention that with all sincerity our thoughts are with the families of the loved ones that were lost in the Fort Hood shooting.

It was our former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, who said, "If women are healthy and educated their families will flourish. If women are free from violence their families will flourish. If women have a chance to work and earn as full and equal partners in society, their families will flourish and when families flourish communities and nations will flourish."

We are in the year 2014, yet women still account for two-thirds of the world's 774 million adult illiterates, a proportion that has remained unchanged over the past two decades.

And while the overall progress in primary education on a global scale in the past decades is encouraging, major barriers still persist. According to a recent World Bank study, 72 million children, a majority of them girls, are out of school.

For this reason, although we may differ in opinion as to how much we should devote to particular programs in the international arena on this committee, we know that there is an investment that will continue to yield high returns and that investment is in women.

Through their individual empowerment, whole communities stand to benefit from women who have already been assisting their communities through both traditional and nontraditional means, particularly, in regard to dealing with youth in areas that have been impacted by violent extremism.

Violent extremism is not a regional infliction but crosses all national and regional boundaries. It can infiltrate our community or culture and is not bound to one cause or another, often leaving us with a feeling of helplessness at its extensiveness.

Violent extremism is also remarkably self-regenerating, a reality that makes efforts to understand its origin, quell its spread, and counter its impact extremely difficult.

Now, with the final year of troop withdrawal from Afghanistan underway and the final effects of the Arab Spring yet to be seen, we have had to emphasize focus on developments in the Mideast and Southeast Asia.

But the time is right to elevate the conversation on women's role in civil society and countering violent extremism in this regard throughout the world. Our discussion today should not revisit the countless reasons why women, half of the world's population, should also account for half of its civic participation in leadership.

Instead, we should seize this opportunity to hear from our three esteemed panelists on what precisely the U.S. Government and aid organizations are doing and should be doing to have the most impact abroad.

Already, organizations like Muflehun and the World Organization for Resource Development and Education and the U.S. Institute for Peace, to name those represented today, are having this conversation and drawing attention to this important topic.

However, here in Washington, where there is no shortage of intellect, policy experts and curiosity, too often these conversations remain within separate communities from security experts to civilian organizations and academia. It is time, as I said, to elevate this conversation to the highest level.

In the short term, yes, it is critical to build up security forces so they are self-sufficient and can directly respond to counter violent extremism with targeted enthusiasm. In the long term, however, we must ensure that our efforts yield greater economic opportunity.

It is through access, through education, that we can most effectively empower half of the world's population—our women and our girls—as the front line agents of change.

Today, we will hear directly from active members of the peacebuilding community and learn about their efforts to prevent extremist violence and make women, even those in the most marginalized positions, a part of the global solution.

I look forward to their insightful testimony and I encourage my colleagues to utilize this opportunity to expand our understanding of how we in Congress can better ensure effectiveness in existing programs and resources, and I yield back my time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Keating.

Mr. Keating was instrumental in helping organize this committee and bringing it together for this hearing this morning on this issue. So I wanted to thank him in particular for his leadership on this important issue. We will now go to our distinguished panel of witnesses.

For over two decades, Dr. Hedieh Mirahmadi has briefed numerous policy members and led several innovative programs to explore counter extremism initiatives in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. She also established the International Cultural Center to engage families in community building initiatives.

Ms. Humera Khan is the executive director of Muflehun, a think tank specializing in preventing radicalization and countering vio-



lent extremism. Previously, she designed and integrated methodologies for threat anticipation and risk assessment.

Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast is director of the Gender and Peacebuilding Center at the U.S. Institute for Peace. Dr. Kuehnast has worked 15 years in the international development field where her research has included studies on community-driven development and post-conflict reconstruction.

Without objection, the witnesses' full prepared statements will be considered part of the record and members will be given 5 calendar days to submit any questions or statements or extraneous materials for the record.

And we will ask Ms. Mirahmadi if she could please summarize her statement. You are on.

**STATEMENT OF HEDIEH MIRAHMADI, PH.D., PRESIDENT,  
WORLD ORGANIZATION FOR RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
AND EDUCATION**

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Keating and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify here before you today.

Some experts rightly argue that the pursuit and apprehension of terrorists is a very different functional problem than the prevention of new recruits. The goal then of countering violent extremism, CVE as we call it, as opposed to the capture or kill focus of counter terrorism has led to a whole body of social science research that provides a framework for understanding the dynamics of radicalization.

Although we won't be able to predict who can be radicalized, we can mitigate the factors that leave a man or a woman vulnerable in the first place. This is the space where community-based programming is so critical.

Increasing women's access to secular and mainstream religious education is an important part about how they will prevent radicalism. In addition to expanding their access, there needs to be curriculum within these programs which undercuts the bifurcated world view presented by extremists who perpetrate a culture of hatred and misconceptions of the other.

Fortunately, some female activists in Pakistan have already begun implementing such a solution. So over the past 4 years my organization, WORDE, has conducted field work in over 75 cities across Afghanistan and Pakistan to explore community-based solutions to violence. I presented those examples in my testimony but here I would like to highlight just a few.

For example, in Kabul, in the Hanukah Parwan, it supports a neighboring madrassah that has approximately 700 students, female students, at all times, solving women's problems, including family disputes and the teachers serving as confidantes and mentors to these young girls.

In Kandahar during a heavy period of violence in 2010 it was thousands of women who congregated to urge the warring Taliban and pro-state factions to lay down their weapons. It was so successful that the U.N. organized similar rallies across the country.

In the tribal frontier of Pakistan, Paiman established the Let's Live in Peace project, where women and youth are taught medi-

ation and conflict transformation skills. To date, over the past 20 years Ms. Kadeem has reached over 35,000 youth and 2,000 women.

And finally, Dr. Amina Hoti has recently established the Center for Dialogue and Action at the Foreman Christian College in Lahore where she is developing Pakistan's first interfaith curriculum to educate university students on the importance of pluralism, social harmony, and respecting the other.

And finally, of course, a discussion of women's efforts to increase education and counter extremism would not be complete without a discussion of Malala Yousafzai's fight for girls' education and defeating terrorism. We really hope her legacy will be continued through H.R. 3583.

In countries where governments are corrupt, incapable or unstable, the burden of peacebuilding and countering violent extremism often falls on nongovernmental actors. So I will conclude with some very important recommendations from the activists on the ground, which are important principles for any CVE focus, development and education initiatives.

One, greater efforts should be made to include female activists, especially those outside of urban centers, to any peacebuilding, security, counter terrorism and national reconciliation conferences. They are an essential part of creating local buy-in with their families and communities.

Two, the U.S. should prioritize funding for building the capacity of women-led civil society organizations. Whether they work in the field of education, peacebuilding or nonviolence, they are an important part of the solution.

Three, the U.S. Government could use its power as a convener and facilitator to host female activists from around the world facing political instability and violent extremism so they can share their best practices and learn from one another. It is important to take our local successes and give them a global reach.

And four, as we engage in more peacebuilding initiatives, we have to develop some benchmarks for collaboration. Specifically, we should expect our local partners to share our values in promoting social cohesion and pluralism, respecting religious freedom, and advocating for nonviolent solutions to conflict.

While increasing access to quality secular education can create better jobs for women and reduce some of the economic drivers of radicalization, educated women also play a pivotal role in inculcating their children and eventually their communities against radical narratives.

By empowering more women in this field and especially in cross cultural education, peacebuilding and preventing radicalization, we create the public space necessary for them to be at the forefront of preventing violence.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Mirahmadi follows:]



## **“Women’s Education: Promoting Development, Countering Radicalism”**

**Dr. Hedieh Mirahmadi**

President, World Organization for Resource Development and Education (WORDE)  
Visiting Fellow, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Testimony submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee  
April 3, 2014

Chairman Ed Royce, Ranking Member Eliot Engel, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today about such a critical and timely issue.

As the leaders of the House and Senate Intelligence committees reported several months ago, despite the death of Osama bin Laden and drone strikes aimed at destroying Al Qaeda central, we have actually *lost* ground in the ongoing battle with global terrorism. In fact, the United States is not any safer than it was at the outset of 2011.<sup>1</sup> Despite the \$17.25 billion<sup>2</sup> of US taxpayer dollars spent in fiscal year 2012 on counter terrorism initiatives; and, over a decade of war in two countries, we still have not diminished the appeal of terror recruiters who prey on the disenfranchised and vulnerable both here in the US and abroad. This is particularly alarming, considering that approximately 1,200 American and European Muslims have traveled to Syria to fight and could later refocus their energies on carrying out attacks against the U.S. and Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Some experts rightly argue that the pursuit and apprehension of terrorists is a different functional problem than the prevention of new recruits,<sup>4</sup> which then requires a different set of solutions to the threat. The goal of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), as opposed to the capture or kill focus of counter terrorism, has led to a whole body of social science research that provides a sophisticated analytic framework to understand the dynamics of radicalization.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jason Seher, “Terrorists are Gaining Ground, Intelligence Committee Heads Say,” *CNN*, December 1, 2013

<sup>2</sup> Drew Desilver, “US Spends Over \$16 Billion Annually on Counter Terrorism,” *Pew Research*, September 11, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/09/11/u-s-spends-over-16-billion-annually-on-counter-terrorism/>

<sup>4</sup> Eric Schmitt, “Qaeda Militants Seek Syria Base, US Officials Say,” *New York Times*, March 25, 2014,

[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/26/world/middleeast/qaeda-militants-seek-syria-base-us-officials-say.html?hp&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/26/world/middleeast/qaeda-militants-seek-syria-base-us-officials-say.html?hp&_r=0)

<sup>5</sup> Georgia Holmer, “Countering Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilding Perspective,” *USIP Special Report 336*, September 2013.

<http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR336-Countering%20Violent%20Extremism-A%20Peacebuilding%20Perspective.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

Researchers agree that the motivations for getting involved in extremist violence is highly individualized and can depend on a variety of factors.<sup>6</sup>

In the counter-radicalization training my organization, the World Organization for Resource Development and Education (WORDE), provides to law enforcement, we describe these risk factors in a cluster model similar to that used by the Department of Homeland Security; however, it varies slightly based on our own research and programmatic experience. The clusters are: deviant ideologies, political grievances, psychological disorders, sociological motivators, and economic factors. These factors, when combined, provide a dangerous and powerful framework. They highlight why, given two people who are exposed to the same conditions (and even come from the same family), one may step toward involvement in terrorism and the other may not.

Although we cannot predict who will be radicalized, we can try to mitigate the factors that make a man, or a woman, vulnerable in the first place. This is the space where community-based programming is so critical because prevention programs must be tailored to the needs of the local population.

#### **“SOFT” RADICALIZATION AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN**

Unfortunately, the risk of radicalization is not exclusive to men. Our research has uncovered an alarming trend we describe as the soft radicalization of women. In regions throughout South and Southeast Asia, the US and some parts of Europe, women are being indoctrinated into a very austere and intolerant interpretation of religion, which encourages a bifurcated world view hostile to non-believers and discourages women from working outside the home. It is perpetuated through a small cell structure similar to other extremist recruiters and is often undetected by intelligence services because it does not actively promote violence.

This indoctrination leads some women to be not only sympathizers and supporters of radical ideologies – but also perpetrators of terror.<sup>7</sup> According to a recent report by the OSCE Secretariat on women and countering violent extremism (CVE), women have perpetuated enough attacks and are being continually recruited for further plots, that it warrants designing effective “gender-sensitive and human rights-compliant preventive actions”.<sup>8</sup>

Several reasons are cited for women’s radicalization and involvement in terrorist acts, including both *individual* and *social factors*. Although motivations are complex, such factors include: avenging the death of relatives, the promise of a better life for their children, unmet needs and unresolved grievances, the need for companionship, and even feminism.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes, a sense

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*

<sup>7</sup> Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Rafia Barakat and Liat Shetret, “The Roles of Women in Terrorism, Conflict, and Violent Extremism: Lessons for the United Nations and International Actors,” *Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation Police Brief*, April 2013. [http://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/13Apr11\\_Women-and-Terrorism-Prevention\\_Final.pdf](http://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/13Apr11_Women-and-Terrorism-Prevention_Final.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Women and Terrorist Radicalization, *OSCE Secretariat – OSCE ODIHR Expert Roundtables Final Report*, Vienna, February 2013. <http://polis.osce.org/library/f/4061/3772/OSCE-AUT-RPT-4061-EN-3772>

<sup>9</sup> Saba Noor and Daniela Hussein, “Women Radicalization - An Empirical Study,” *Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)*, April 2010, pg.2.

of personal victimization leads women to get involved in terrorism. For example, the Chechen Black Widows included many women who were widowed or brutalized by the Russian Army while personal grievances led some of these women to suicide terrorism as well.<sup>10</sup>

The threat of radicalization among female converts is a particularly worrisome phenomenon. Some of these women may have been radicalized as a result of mounting pressure from their partners.<sup>11</sup> This includes the cases of Michigan-born Muslim convert Nicole Lynn Mansfield who became the first American to die in the Syrian conflict while siding with Syrian rebels; and, the Belgian convert Muriel Degauque who died in a suicide bombing against a US convey south of Baghdad in 2005.

One of the most notorious cases of a female terrorist, possibly radicalized by a spouse, is Samantha Lewthwaite, also known as the "White Widow." Lewthwaite was married to Jermaine Lindsay, also a convert, and a suicide bomber of the London 7/7 attacks which killed 26 people. She is believed to be one of the masterminds behind the recent Watergate Mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya.<sup>12</sup> She has also allegedly indoctrinated her children with violent ideologies and helped train all-female terror squads to carry out attacks.

In addition to direct support and execution of terrorist attacks, women are playing a supporting role by raising funds for violent extremist activities across the world. In 2009, Colleen La Rose, known as "Jihad Jane," was charged with conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and for planning to murder Swedish cartoonist Lars Vilks. La Rose, who was radicalized after she met Al Qaeda operatives online, had established an online network of donors to provide material support to terrorists.

#### **WOMEN ARE CRITICAL ACTORS IN COMMUNITY-BASED CVE SOLUTIONS**

While further research is needed into the roles that women play as perpetrators of terrorism, and particularly what motivates them, it is recognized that women can play a critical role in preventing and countering radicalization. In particular, given women's central role in families and in communities, they are uniquely positioned to intervene in the radicalization of their children since they are most likely to spot changes in their children's behavior, but may not have the confidence or access to police to share these concerns.<sup>13</sup>

Recognizing the potential of women as changemakers, several organizations around the world have empowered women to address a broad range of issues from poverty alleviation and

<sup>10</sup> Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, "Individual and Group Mechanisms of Radicalization," *Topical Strategic Multi-layer Assessment (SMA): Protecting the Homeland from International and Domestic Terrorism Threats*, January 2010. <http://www.brynmawr.edu/psychology/documents/McCauleyMoskalenko.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Abigail R. Esman, "The Growing Terror Threat From Radical Women Converts," *Special to IPT News*, October 17, 2013. <http://www.investigativeproject.org/4190/the-growing-terror-threat-from-radical-women>

<sup>12</sup> Rebecca Evans, Paul Bentley and Becky Evans, "Kenya Mall Attack Has Samantha Lewthwaite British White Widow Killed Nairobi Siege", *The Daily Mail*, 24 September 2013. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2429784/Kenya-mall-attack-Has-Samantha-Lewthwaite-British-White-Widow-killed-Nairobi-siege.html#ixzz2xC21sx4Q>

<sup>13</sup> "Women and Preventing Violent Extremism: The U.S. and U.K. Experiences" *Center for Human Rights and Global Justice* Briefing Paper, 2012. <http://chrgj.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Women-and-Violent-Extremism-The-US-and-UK-Experiences.pdf>

conflict resolution, to countering violent extremism. CARE, the international humanitarian organization fighting global poverty for almost seven decades, believes that “when you empower a girl or a woman, she becomes a catalyst for positive change whose success benefits everyone around her....”<sup>14</sup> CARE’s work in 86 countries around the world, supporting over 900 poverty-fighting development and emergency projects, is informed by this premise. Development and advocacy organizations such as Women Thrive similarly work to foster positive change in communities by empowering women through education, economic opportunities, and food security programs.<sup>15</sup>

In the field of human security, SAVE (Sisters Against Violent Extremism) has created “mothers schools”, which brings together mothers from around the world determined to create a united front against violent extremism.<sup>16</sup> Founded by Dr. Edith Schlaffer, SAVE provides women with the tools for critical debate, which challenges extremist thinking and sensitizes mothers of adolescents, so they can play a more active role in the prevention of radicalization both at home and in their communities.

Finally, several initiatives have also been spearheaded by Muslim women to empower women in their communities. For example, the Peaceful Families Project, an international organization dedicated to ending domestic violence in Muslim families, facilitates awareness workshops to educated Muslim leaders about the problem.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) organizes conferences that network influential Muslim women from around the world to address contemporary challenges in society. ASMA has also formed the Global Muslim Women’s Shura Council to address sensitive issues such as domestic violence and violent extremism.<sup>18</sup>

#### **RAISING WOMEN’S VOICES AGAINST VIOLENT NARRATIVES THROUGH EDUCATION**

Despite their demonstrated potential, the capacity of women in the peacebuilding field remains underdeveloped. Increasing women’s access to secular *and* religious education will be a critical factor in amplifying their voices against radical narratives. As one journalist put it, girls’ schools are “just about the best long-term counterterrorism investment available.”<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, women face a number of obstacles in attaining access to quality education. It can be inadequate facilities for women, a shortage of female teachers, conservative social or cultural norms, or targeted violence from radical Islamists that prevents girls from going to school. Not surprisingly, literacy rates in countries that are contending with violent extremism are also low. In Afghanistan for example, less than 13% of women are literate.<sup>20</sup> In Pakistan,

<sup>14</sup> “Mission and Vision,” CARE, <http://www.care.org/about/mission-vision> [accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>15</sup> “Issues,” Women Thrive, <http://womenthrive.org/issues> [accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>16</sup> Save: Sisters Against Violent Extremism, <http://www.women-without-borders.org/save> [Accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>17</sup> “About,” Peaceful Families Project, <http://www.peacefulfamilies.org/about-pfp/> [accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>18</sup> “About Us,” The Global Muslim Women’s Shura Council, <http://www.wisemuslimwomen.org/about/shuracouncil/>

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas Kristoff, “Pakistan and Times Sq.,” *The New York Times*, May 12, 2010

[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/13/opinion/13kristof.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/13/opinion/13kristof.html?_r=0)

<sup>20</sup> “Literacy,” CIA World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2103.html>

38% of girls are literate, but they are twice as likely as boys to drop out, lowering female literacy rates in some areas to a mere 8%.<sup>21</sup>

Access to quality religious education remains equally elusive for many women in regions at-risk of violent extremism. In Pakistani rural society, where females are often barred from the public sphere, girls will only get a limited religious education at home<sup>22</sup> that focuses on rote memorization of religious texts. In the absence of critical thinking skills and exposure to pluralistic religious interpretations, women may be prone to manipulation and radicalization by those who use a more austere interpretation of the faith.<sup>23</sup> As a result, there are generations of women who are inadvertently radicalized and pass on those perspectives to their children and other family members.

The susceptibility of women to radical religious indoctrination demonstrates the importance of mainstream religious training of women as an often overlooked preventative strategy in countering violent extremist narratives. In Morocco, the Mursheeda program does just this by empowering women to counsel others in family and religious matters after participating in a rigorous 45-week training which includes courses in psychology, law, history, communication and religion. The Mursheeda program was established in 2006, and in 2009, the State Department hailed it as a "pioneering" effort in Morocco's approach to combat violent interpretations of Islam.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to expanding access for women and girls to basic secular education and mainstream religious education, there needs to be curricula within these programs, which undercuts the bifurcated world view presented by extremists who perpetuate a culture of hatred and misconceptions of the "other." In fact, the implementation of cross-cultural education in tackling violent extremism is gaining global attention. In a December 2013 address to the United Nations, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair emphasized the importance of cross cultural education in defeating radical narratives, especially as a more cost-effective solution than counter terrorism operations.<sup>25</sup> As discussed below, some female activists in Pakistan have already begun implementing such a solution.

#### COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

Over the past four years, WORDE has conducted fieldwork in over 75 cities and villages across Afghanistan and Pakistan to explore innovative community-based solutions to violence, including those focused on the role of women in this field. The lessons learned from this region

<sup>21</sup> "Why Education and Why Pakistan," *Developments in Literacy (DIL)*, <http://www.dil.org/why-education-and-why-pakistan/> [accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>22</sup> Saba Noor and Daniela Hussein, "Women Radicalization - An Empirical Study," *Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)*, April 2010.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>24</sup> Robin Shulman, "Morocco's New Guiding Force," *The Washington Post*, May 30, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/29/AR2009052903182.html>

<sup>25</sup> Claudette Yazbek, "Global Attention Turns to Education for Countering Extremism," *Al Arabiya News*, 5 December 2013. <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2013/12/05/Countering-extremism-through-education-the-21st-century-s-security-issue.html>

are also applicable to other Muslim majority countries struggling with religious radicalism and political insecurity.

### ***Afghanistan***

In Afghanistan, the US and the international community have provided over \$35 billion in non-security related aid<sup>26</sup> that is part of the most expensive reconstruction effort in our country's history.<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, our investments have produced mixed results. Although a greater percentage of children – particularly girls – attend school, other social development indicators remain low. Corruption is still widespread across the government, key human rights remain unprotected, and terrorism continues to plague the 76% of the population residing outside urban centers.<sup>28</sup>

There is no denying that after the US troop withdrawal, budget allocations for reconstruction or development in Afghanistan will decrease dramatically; however, the threat of violent extremism thriving in this region will remain our country's greatest national security threat. Beyond 2014, the US and the international community will need to find economical and effective ways of containing the growth and spread of militancy in the region, as well as protecting the significant investments we have already made in the country. Diversifying our engagements with civil society --to include additional women's groups-- should be a vital part of creating a low-cost, effective national security strategy in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's civil society actors are a critical component in fostering a sustainable grassroots peace and reconciliation movement and preventing violent extremists from returning to power.<sup>29</sup> To date, however, Afghan peace negotiations have been widely criticized for underutilizing local thought leaders and activists who have credibility at the grassroots level.

These civil society actors, including women NGO leaders and activists, can counter radicalism at the grassroots level by inoculating their communities with a mainstream religious education that protects them against the indoctrination of the terrorists. They also advance the cause of women in secular education, health, and promoting non-violence generally. Some programs that focused on women include:<sup>30</sup>

- The Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL), an Afghan women-led NGO founded in 1995 by Dr. Sakina Yacoobi, provides teacher training to Afghan women, supports education for boys and girls, and provides health education to women and children. Today, AIL

<sup>26</sup> Arshad Mohammed and Kiyoshi Takenaka, "Donors Offer \$16 Billion Afghan Aid at Tokyo Conference," *Reuters*, July 8, 2012, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/07/08/uk-afghanistan-clinton-idUKBRE86602120120708>

<sup>27</sup> Ken Ballen, "Hopes are Dim for Afghanistan," *CNN*, November 25, 2013

<sup>28</sup> "Urban Population (% of Total)," *World Bank*, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS> [accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>29</sup> Matt Waldman, *Community Peace-building in Afghanistan*. Kabul: Oxfam International, 2008.

<sup>30</sup> See, Hedieh Mirahmadi, Mehreen Farooq, Waleed Ziad, "Afghanistan 2014 and Beyond: The Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding and Countering Violent Extremism," *WORDE Report*, February 2014.



supports 80 underground home schools for 3,000 girls in Afghanistan. Its Learning Centers for Afghan women is a concept now replicated by many organizations throughout Afghanistan.<sup>31</sup>

- In Kabul, the Khaniqa Pahlawan, a historical center for the study of culture and spirituality, supports a neighboring women's madrasa that has approximately 700 students. The women's madrasa also functions as an alternative space for solving women's problems particularly for internal family disputes, and many of the teachers serve as confidantes and mentors to the young girls.<sup>32</sup> Nearby, the Masjid-e Muhammad Mustafa (unlike many other mosques in the region) has a prayer space for women, hosting over hundred women for Friday prayers, and up to a thousand during Ramadan. The space was created to encourage more women to learn mainstream Islamic beliefs.<sup>33</sup>
- In addition, some religious scholars are working to incorporate women into existing religious institutions. The popular Mufti Shamsur Rahman Feraton, who regularly appears on television, recently established a Dar ul-Ifta, which provides religious opinions and guidance to a broad range of people from businessmen to policymakers, seeking advice on Islamic jurisprudence. He has also has trained 12 women as religious scholars to provide guidance to Afghan women on a wide range of topics including family issues.<sup>34</sup>
- Other organizations such as the Noor Educational and Development Organization (NECDO) have worked with local Sunni and Shia religious scholars to develop culturally sensitive training manuals on women's rights in such areas as education, property ownership, inheritance, marriage rights, and social participation.<sup>35</sup>
- In Kandahar, during a heavy period of violence in 2010, thousands of women congregated at a local shrine to speak out against the proliferation of violence. The shrine caretaker provided the women with a loudspeaker to urge warring Taliban and pro-state factions to lay down their weapons. The campaign was credited for generating public awareness about national reconciliation. Due to the success of this campaign, similar initiatives were organized and supported by the UN across the country.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>31</sup> "About Us", *Afghanistan Institute of Learning*, <http://www.afghaninstituteoflearning.org/dr-sakena-yacoobi-bio.html> [accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>32</sup> See, Hedieh Mirahmadi, Mehreen Farooq, Waleed Ziad, "Afghanistan 2014 and Beyond: The Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding and Countering Violent Extremism," *WORDE Report*, February 2014.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*

<sup>34</sup> *ibid*

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*

<sup>36</sup> Rangina Hamidi, "Advancing Women's Civil Society Organizations in Security Sector Reform," (Public Event at the US Institute of Peace), April 10, 2013.

### **Pakistan**

The persistence of violent extremism in Pakistan and the deterioration of US-Pakistan relations signal the need for a major paradigm shift in our engagement strategy with Pakistan. Ultimately, a strategic partnership marked by renewed investment in Pakistan's civil society, focused on addressing issues of mutual concern such as peace and stability, can both rebuild trust and usher in a new, more sustainable chapter in US-Pakistan relations.

The desire of Pakistanis to eliminate violent extremism is visible throughout the country. Despite frequent terrorist attacks, civil society organizations across Pakistan have organized public rallies, demonstrations, art projects, newspaper articles, television and radio programs—all geared towards generating public awareness about the dangers of extremism. Through capacity-building, technical assistance, and material support, the US can help Pakistani activists to further counter extremism in their communities. This strategy will require the US to move beyond a transactional relationship with civilian and military officials, to one that invests in developing Pakistan's civil society, especially women.

Unlike Afghanistan, in Pakistan women have a more active role in civil society and have more opportunities to participate in community led peacebuilding efforts. Some impressive efforts led by women include:<sup>37</sup>

- In the tribal frontier, the women's organization PAIMAN established the "Let's Live in Peace Project" in which women and youth are taught mediation and conflict transformation skills. According to the founder, Mossarat Qadeem, teaching women these values provides them the capacity to influence their husbands and sons to disengage from militant organizations.<sup>38</sup> Over the past 20 years, Ms. Qadeem has set up centers for conflict prevention and peace building that train university students in local communities, that has reached over 35,000 youths and 2,000 women.
- Bushra Hyder, the Director of the Qadims Lumier School and College in Peshawar has designed and implemented a peace education curriculum that introduces students to cultural and religious diversity and is designed to inculcate compassion and tolerance. Her students have formed a group called "Peace Angels" that organizes hospital field trips to meet with victims of terrorism. According to Ms. Hyder, the program helps students understand that violence cannot solve conflict.<sup>39</sup>
- Dr. Amineh Hoti, recently established the Center for Dialogue and Action at Foreman Christian College in Lahore, where she is developing Pakistan's first inter-faith curriculum. At a time when sectarian conflict is increasing in Pakistan, the objective of

<sup>37</sup> See, Hedieh Mirahmadi, Mehreen Farooq, Waleed Ziad "Traditional Muslim Networks: Pakistan's Untapped Resource in the Fight Against Terrorism," *WORDE Report*, October 2012.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*

the program is to provide training and resources for universities to educate Pakistan's youth on the importance of pluralism, social harmony and respecting the "other."<sup>40</sup>

- Sabiha Shaheen is the Executive Director of Bargad, a youth led organization working for youth development in Pakistan. Bargad has a vast volunteer base with over 54 universities participating. In 2013, their program conducted in conjunction with the US Institute of Peace, "Tackling Youth Extremism in Pakistan", provided youth training, media design and promotion of pro-peace youth policies to curb political support of extremism and intolerance. Bargad also mobilizes students by sponsoring events on youth radicalization at campuses nationwide.<sup>41</sup>
- Amn-O-Nisa, Pakistan Women's Coalition Against Extremism, was launched in October 2011 to address instability and violence in Pakistan. Each of its members possesses considerable experience in law, advocacy and governance. Included in its ranks are several members of the aforementioned PAIMAN, freelance consultants such as Huma Chughtai (who teaches men, women, youth, and students about conflict resolution), and Sameena Imtiaz, Executive Director of Peace Education and Development (PEAD) Foundation, which leads training courses for youth groups, teachers, clergy, and community leaders to promote tolerance and nonviolence.<sup>42</sup>
- There are a number of secular educational organizations dedicated to providing quality education to Pakistan's youth as well. For example, the Citizens Foundation (TCF) is responsible for a variety of educational programs that provide affordable primary and secondary private education to low-income students in Pakistan's urban slums and rural areas, with a focus on girls. Their model focuses on attracting and retaining female students and employs female teachers, keeping in line with local conservative social mores. Across Pakistan, TCF's 910 schools have helped to shift attitudes toward female education.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, a discussion of women's efforts to counter extremism in Pakistan would be incomplete without including Malala Yousafzai's fight for girls' rights to education and defeating terrorism. Her campaign for girls' education began in 2007 but garnered significant international support after she nearly died in 2012 from a Taliban attack. Today, her battle continues through the Malala Fund, an organization that partners with local groups to bring education to girls.<sup>44</sup> Her legacy will hopefully also be continued through H.R. 3583: The Malala Yousafzai Scholarship

<sup>40</sup> "FCC Opens New Centre for Dialogue and Action," *Foreman Christian College*, <http://www.fccollege.edu.pk/fcc-opens-new-centre-for-dialogue-and-action> [accessed March 30, 2014]

<sup>41</sup> "Projects," *BARGAD*, <http://www.bargad.org.pk/detail-project.asp?projID=19> [accessed March 31, 2014]

<sup>42</sup> "Against All Odds in Pakistan: Women Combatting Radicalization," *Meridian International*, <http://www.meridian.org/meridian/news/item/696-against-all-odds-in-pakistan-women-combatting-radicalization> [accessed March 29, 2014]

<sup>43</sup> "Social Entrepreneurs," *Skoll Foundation*, <http://www.skollfoundation.org/entrepreneur/mushtaq-chohpra/> [accessed March 31, 2014]

<sup>44</sup> <http://malalafund.org/>

Act, which is a wonderful way of increasing access to education for underprivileged girls in Pakistan.

#### **ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING CIVIL SOCIETY FOR PEACEBUILDING**

Throughout the world, civil society actors play a critical role in peacebuilding where the rule of law is absent or ineffective. In particular, where government is corrupt, incapable or unstable; the burden of peacebuilding and countering violent extremism (CVE) often falls on non-governmental actors. Today, in countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, it is the civil society actors who are leading effective CVE initiatives to refute radical narratives and promote peacebuilding endeavors. As such, they are well positioned to become partners for the US and the international community in defeating terrorism.

A very encouraging development is the recent announcement of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, specifically focused on resourcing community based projects that build resiliency against violent extremist agendas. The creators of the fund recognize that long-term success in the fight against terrorism rests with the local communities' ability to address the local drivers of radicalization to violence.<sup>45</sup>

The Global Fund represents a critical step in providing tangible resources to programs that will form the backbone of any long term strategy of reducing radicalization through education, development, and creating economic opportunities, especially for women.<sup>46</sup>

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following is a list of recommendations from activists in Afghanistan and Pakistan; but, they are important principles for any CVE-focused development and education initiatives.<sup>47</sup>

##### **Consistently Involve Women in Peace Processes**

To date, civil society activists, particularly women, are only marginally included in major peacebuilding and national reconciliation conferences. Greater efforts should be made to invite female regional activists, especially those outside of urban centers. These community leaders are an essential part of creating local buy-in for any peacebuilding efforts especially in countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan where the central government's reach is either limited or considered corrupt.

##### **Prioritize Funding for Training and Skills-building Programs for Female Activists**

The US should prioritize funding for building the capacity of women-led civil society organizations (CSO's) that work in the field of education, peacebuilding, and nonviolence.

<sup>45</sup> "Creating a Global Fund for Community Engagement and Resilience," *Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of the Spokesperson* (Fact Sheet), February 21, 2014. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/02/221903.htm>

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>47</sup> These are the most common needs that CSOs communicated to us throughout our research. See, Hedieh Mirahmadi, Mehreen Farooq, Waleed Ziad, "Afghanistan 2014 and Beyond: The Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding and Countering Violent Extremism," *WORDE Report*, February 2014.

Training in skills such as non-profit management, fiscal responsibility, civic engagement, coalition building, communications training, and social media skills are consistently requested by activists on the ground. Special effort should be made to make the training available for women-led grassroots and/or un-registered organizations outside of main city centers.

#### **Improving Grant Allocation Processes to Include Women's Groups**

It is important to expand the base of grant recipients from US funding sources so more organizations are empowered to effect change in their communities. The current grant amount for many of the requests for proposals at USAID or the State Department is larger than most CSOs can absorb so they lose out on funding opportunities. This can be resolved by requiring the larger grant recipients to provide at least several smaller grants to local organizations.

#### **Fund Exchanges of Women Activists who have Experience in CVE**

The US government can use its power as a facilitator and convener to host regular exchanges of female activists from countries facing political instability and violent extremism so they can share experiences and learn from one another's best practices. For example, the women in Kandahar who organized a peace rally can empower women in Yemen with real life examples of how to do the same in their country. It is important to take the local successes and give them a global reach.

#### **Empower the Next Generation of Female Leaders**

Although young female activists may have the passion and determination to lead counter-extremism programs, they need substantial training in social mobilization, civic engagement, and leadership development to reach their full potential.

#### **Cultivate Relationships with Women in the Diaspora**

Women activists in the US, who come from countries facing violent extremism, have an immense potential to enhance the strength and growth of civil society abroad.<sup>48</sup> The USG should engage these activists in frequent roundtables to inform policy and development initiatives that are targeted at these countries. The State Department's US-Pakistan Women's Council and the US- Afghanistan Women's Council are excellent forums which should be replicated with other diaspora communities.

#### **Establish Consistent Benchmarks for Identifying Local Partners**

More refined screening processes will be required to properly vet local partners. Several international organizations, for example, noted that due to logistical limitations they are not able to perform background checks on partners to verify that they are not associated with violent extremism. As we engage more partners for peacebuilding initiatives, it is vital that we develop a set of benchmarks for collaboration. Specifically, we should expect local partners to share our values in promoting social cohesion and pluralism, respecting religious freedom, and advocating non-violent solutions to conflict.

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<sup>48</sup> "US-EU Expert CVE Meeting on Pakistan and Pakistani Diaspora Communities," Brussels, January 24-25, 2012.

**Conclusion**

While increasing access to quality secular education can create better jobs for women and reduce some of the economic drivers of radicalization, educated women also play a pivotal role in inoculating their children, and eventually their communities, against the radical narratives used to recruit followers.

By empowering more women leaders in the field of cross cultural education, peace building, and preventing radicalization, we create the public space necessary for them to be at the forefront of preventing violence in their communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify here today and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Chairman ROYCE. Go ahead.

**STATEMENT OF MS. HUMERA KHAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
MUFLEHUN**

Ms. KHAN. Good morning, Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Keating, and members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you today to discuss the role of women's education in promoting development and countering radicalization.

My remarks are going to be a summary of the statement, which has been submitted, and I will actually be focusing on the role of education specific to countering violent extremism.

This is a field where we have multiple definitions of CVE so let me lay out the definition I will be using in my statement. Countering violent extremism is the use of noncoercive means to dissuade individuals or groups from radicalizing toward violence and to mitigate recruitment, support, or engagement in ideologically motivated terrorism by nonstate actors in the furtherance of political objectives.

Now, the programming which happens around it is around denying terrorist groups new recruits and this is by providing positive alternatives, countering terrorists' narratives, but also building the capacity of government and civil society.

We have to recognize that CVE goals are very specific and that actually separates them out from both development and public diplomacy. So while there is a difference in the objectives, both development programs and public diplomacy initiatives can actually have secondary and tertiary impacts for CVE goals.

Now, the most effective way for CVE programming to meet its objectives is a whole of society approach, which means everyone in society, all sectors, and we can categorize the programming based on prevention, intervention, interdiction and rehabilitation.

And one of the things we have to be aware that we have—there is CVE relevant programming and that helps establish stronger and more resilient communities, and they have a reduced vulnerability toward radicalization to violent extremism.

And so many of these programs are actually preventative and these are the examples, and several educational initiatives are in CVE-relevant programming. But at the same time, there is a need for very specific CVE-specific programming with direct CVE goals, and these will be—some of them will be preventative, but they will also be working in the areas of intervention, interdiction and rehabilitation.

And those CVE programs become really important, and programs like raising awareness of terrorism threats, what is radicalization, types of behavioral indicators, counseling for radicalized youth all fall under CVE-specific programming.

Now, what we have to keep front and center is that the impact of women's education is always going to be within the context of their role in society. So in the patriarchal societies that we are talking about, right, the voice of women, their empowerment, is curtailed.

So when you educate women and they are empowered what you are doing is changing the status quo, which means men are imme-

diately also stakeholders in this change. And if you do not have community support for your initiatives they will not be effective.

Now, despite all the society constraints that exist, women are actually full participants in all types of CVE programming, both CVE specific and CVE relevant in prevention, intervention, interdiction, rehabilitation—all aspects of it.

I would like to emphasize that whereas CVE-relevant educational and vocational programs are essential for healthy societies, they will actually not be sufficient in eliminating extremism without CVE-specific initiatives as well.

So, in the interests of time, I am going to refer you to my written statement on the section on reducing barriers to women's participation. I would like to highlight that educating women on recognizing the signs of radicalization is actually a very good early warning system for communities.

Also, the need to help women and families of people who are violent extremists, whether they have been arrested or dead, because what it does is prevents them from sending or supporting more of the family members into violent extremism.

We know that social media is an equalizer for cases where women have limited voice because it gives them a way to express their views despite society constraints, and we know that in countries like Pakistan where 60 percent of the women are illiterate, broadcast media has to be used because print media will not reach them. So radio and television are very effective in reaching the target audience.

So I would like to conclude by saying that development of CVE-specific customized local curriculums have to be used to push back against violent extremism in addition to the CVE relevant preventative programs, and this combination of both CVE-specific and CVE relevant programs has the ability to build community resilience, empower women, and counter extremism in the long run.

So in this world where women are often victimized and they are oppressed by extremists, it is actually very heartening to see that they are able to transform themselves through education to be the line of defense against violence and extremism.

And so really supporting increased enrollment in tertiary education for the women of Pakistan, through the Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act, is an important step toward improving the role and empowering them to become change makers in the society.

So Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Keating, and members of the committee, thank you for your attention and I look forward to answering any questions that you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Khan follows:]





## WOMEN'S EDUCATION: PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT AND COUNTERING RADICALISM

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Humera Khan

Executive Director, Muflehun

Testimony submitted to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs

April 3, 2014

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Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today to discuss the role of women's education in development and radicalization. The "Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act" (H.R. 3583) is an excellent step towards helping empower the women of Pakistan.

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*"For my brothers it was easy to think about the future. They can be anything they want. But for me it was hard and for that reason I wanted to become educated and empower myself with knowledge." - Malala Yousafzai*

### Introduction

Education is a basic human right and access should be gender-neutral. It is an unfortunate reality that this is not the case in certain parts of the globe. Whereas the worldwide male literacy rate is 89% compared to a female literacy rate of 80%, the difference is starker in the following regions<sup>1</sup>:

- Arab states- 83% male vs 66% female
- South and West Asia- 74% male vs 52% female
- Sub-Saharan Africa- 71% male vs 54% female

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<sup>1</sup> All literacy figures taken from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UNESCO e-Atlas for Gender Equality in Education <http://www.app.collinsindicate.com/atlas-gender-education/en-us>

Despite challenges including socio-economic barriers, cultural norms, stereotypes, lack of access in rural settings, personal safety and violence<sup>2</sup>, the benefits gained through women's education are many<sup>3</sup>:

**Tolerance & Social Cohesion:** Higher levels of education are known to coincide with increased tolerance towards others, especially due to secondary & tertiary education. Along with a reduced risk of conflict in areas with the least education inequality, one additional benefit is increased political participation.

**Economic:** Education has the impact of increasing job opportunities, productivity and earnings. This results in a reduction in poverty and the ability to stay out of poverty. Another shift that comes from changing values attributed to education is a reduced tolerance for corruption which ultimately benefits the country.

**Health and Environment:** The education level of mothers has consistently shown to improve early childhood care and has reduced maternal mortality in many countries. This also influences reduction in child marriages and early births in girls who stay in school longer. Additionally, education results in greater awareness of environmental issues.

Whereas the role of women's education in development has been well documented and studied, there is limited empirical analysis on their role in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). To understand this better, we need to understand the context of CVE.

### Countering Violent Extremism

As the threat of violent extremism has continued to plague our world, governments and communities alike have been prioritizing efforts to counter it through non-kinetic initiatives that inform, influence, and change hearts and minds. Over time, CVE objectives, strategies and programming have been refined and updated to reflect the evolving threat environment.

In a field with multiple definitions of CVE, and in some cases where no definition has been published by government agencies running CVE programming, the need to be specific is necessary to establish the scope of the problem and solution space. The definition of CVE used for the purposes of this statement is as follows:

***Countering violent extremism is the use of non-coercive means to dissuade individuals or groups from radicalizing towards violence, and to mitigate recruitment, support or engagement in ideologically motivated terrorism by non-state actors, in furtherance of political objectives.***

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<sup>2</sup> Extracted from "From Access to Equality: Empowering Girls and Women Through Literacy and Secondary Education" by UNESCO, Paris, France 2012

<sup>3</sup> Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/4: "Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All," UNESCO, Paris, France 2014 <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2013/>

#### CVE Objectives

Currently, the US whole-of-government approach to CVE initiatives using the 3Ds (defense, development and diplomacy) focuses on<sup>4</sup>:

- Countering violent extremist ideology
- Reducing the resonance of violent extremist ideology
- Diminishing specific drivers to violence exploited by violent extremists

These primary strategic objectives are further described to include initiatives by the US government (USG) and its partners to:

- Counter VE ideology by:
  1. Undercutting the legitimacy and discrediting VE messaging
  2. Undercutting efforts to spread VE ideology
- Reduce the resonance of VE ideology by:
  3. Increasing rejection of VE organizations, ideologies, world views
  4. Preventing radicalization (short term)
  5. Preventing radicalization, recruitment and mobilization to VE (long term)
  6. Increasing collective community resilience (by assisting, connecting and engaging)
- Diminish specific drivers to violence exploited by violent extremists by:
  7. Positioning positive vision of engagement with foreign publics
  8. Supporting universal rights
  9. Focused foreign assistance
  10. Focused development assistance

These interdependent and interrelated objectives describe the full scope of CVE programming objectives supported by USG, both domestically and internationally.

The specific goals of our international CVE programming is **“to deny terrorist groups new recruits, by: providing positive alternatives to communities most at risk of recruitment and radicalization to violence; countering terrorist narratives and the violent extremist worldview; and building the capacity of governments and civil society to counter violent extremism.”**<sup>5</sup> The Department of State focuses on programming<sup>6</sup> for community engagement, engaging women, prison disengagement and the countering of terrorist propaganda.

The specificity of the three main CVE objectives thus separates the field from both development and diplomacy. In development, the end goal is to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential<sup>7</sup> while in public diplomacy, our national interests and

<sup>4</sup> The focus of for CVE programming is described in the White House National Strategy for Counterterrorism (2011) and highlights that these are the “efforts to strengthen bulwarks against radicalization, recruitment and mobilization to violence” in the name of violent extremism.

<sup>5</sup> Keynote Address: 2014 Gulf of Aden Regional Counterterrorism Forum. Remarks by Geeta Pasi, U.S. Ambassador to Djibouti, Djibouti, February 3, 2014. <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/rm/2014/221194.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Extracted from Department of State website, March 31, 2014

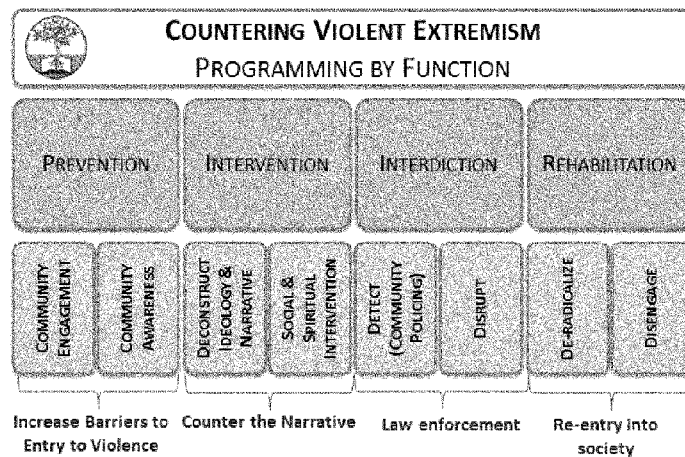
<http://www.state.gov/j/ct/programs/index.htm#CVE>

<sup>7</sup> Extracted from USAID website on March 31, 2014 <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are>

security are furthered by “by informing and influencing foreign publics and by expanding and strengthening the relationship between the people and Government of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world.”<sup>8</sup>

#### CVE Programming

The most effective way for CVE programming to meet the stated objectives is through whole-of-society approaches. There are nearly 100 types of CVE programs implemented across the globe. These programs can be categorized by type (e.g. education, training, engagement, dialogue, law enforcement etc.) however they can also be categorized by function: prevention, intervention, interdiction, rehabilitation. This functional spectrum will be filled by programs run for, and by the following sectors: civilian, corporate, government, law enforcement, military, academic, development and diplomatic.



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It is important to note that despite the difference in objectives between CVE, development and diplomacy, there is programming done under both development and diplomacy initiatives that has secondary and tertiary benefits for CVE goals.

This **CVE-relevant** programming is important to establishing stronger and more resilient communities that have reduced vulnerability towards radicalization to violent extremism. Many of these programs are thus preventative in nature. Examples include community engagement programming, leadership training, vocational training, language education.

<sup>8</sup> Extracted from Department of State website, March 31, 2014 <http://www.state.gov/r/>

There is however also a need for *CVE-specific* programs with direct CVE goals as their primary objective. Some of these programs will also be preventative in nature however there will also be a whole spectrum of intervention programs for mitigating recruitment, mobilization and rehabilitation (de-radicalization and dis-engagement). Examples include educational programs that raise awareness of terrorism threats, counseling for radicalized youth, counter-narratives for extremism, vocational training for prison inmates to prevent recidivism. There are also CVE specific programs like training for law enforcement so they are better able to detect radicalization to violence in the communities they serve.

Despite the overlap in programs, especially for CVE-relevant initiatives done through development and diplomacy channels, it is important to remember that the difference in strategic objectives requires that the evaluation of CVE programs not be done against development objectives, but against CVE objectives. An example might be a soccer matches held for youth that would have clear diplomacy ends however would not be considered a CVE -specific program unless it could articulate which strategic goal it was accomplishing and if it was able to target the at-risk audience.

### Role of Women's Education in Local Contexts

Education initiatives and vocational trainings in general build capacity and have the potential to increase community resilience. By increasing the empowerment of women and their potential for earning a livelihood, within certain contexts, these development programs can also have CVE-relevant effects and indirectly **mitigate factors that increase the propensity towards violence**.

What must be kept front and center is that the impact of women's education will be **within the context of their larger role in society**. In patriarchal societies the level of empowerment, agency, independence and voice of women is often curtailed. Because women's education and therefore empowerment, changes the status quo in society **men too are stakeholders** in women's education efforts. In heavily patriarchal constructs their buy-in is necessary for successful, long term interventions. In countries like Pakistan, reducing female illiteracy from the current unacceptable level of 60% can only happen when the family men and male community members and leaders support the right of women to receive an education. Without the required communal support, any initiative is likely to be ineffective.

### Role of Women's Education in Countering Violent Extremism

Over the long history of terrorism and violent extremism across the globe, we have seen women engage in VE as recruiters, mobilizers, supporters, logisticians and also as participants. Just as they have myriad roles in VE, **women can also be full participants in CVE programs** (both CVE-relevant and CVE-specific). They have roles to play in prevention, intervention, interdiction and rehabilitation initiatives.

As "custodians of cultural, social and religious values"<sup>9</sup> who are instrumental in shaping the current and future generations, women are acutely aware of their community's needs. They are thus able to not just **serve as advisors** for identifying problems they are also able to **participate in designing & implementing contextually appropriate solutions** for their communities. An example is Mindanao, Philippines where

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<sup>9</sup>Fink, N., Barakat, R., and Shetret, Liat., *The Roles of Women in Terrorism, Conflict, and Violent Extremism*, April 2013 [http://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/NCF\\_RB\\_LS\\_policybrief\\_1320.pdf](http://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/NCF_RB_LS_policybrief_1320.pdf)

women school teachers from a village that was targeted by Abu Sayyaf for recruiting new members recognized that the boys most at risk were the ones who had either dropped out of school or were facing economic challenges. These teachers launched an after-school tutoring program aimed at at-risk youth to help keep them in school longer to reduce their vulnerability to extremist recruiting. This locally customized solution was CVE-specific in its context because of its purpose.

What is important to emphasize is that **CVE-specific programs for woman (and men) are needed to directly address the issues of extremism**. Whereas CVE-relevant educational and vocational programs are essential for healthy societies they will not be sufficient in eliminating the scourge of extremism that is rampant in many regions of the world.

### Reducing Barriers to Women's Participation in CVE

Empowering women to be fully engaged in the full spectrum of CVE roles requires a reduction in the current barriers that hinder their involvement. Listed below are recommendations that would facilitate CVE goals.

- **Increase in female educators.** Changing societal attitudes towards women, education and empowerment will take time, in some cases generations. In the meantime, local women and local NGOs that work with women provide access to households and are able to provide gender-safe spaces for women to learn. Encouraging, training and increasing the number of female instructors will make it easier for women to attend educational institutions at primary, secondary and tertiary levels without potential social censure. This will require adjusting the incentive structure to attract more female educators despite social barriers.
- **Training the trainers and curriculum reform.** Updated, locally customized curriculums and well trained female instructors are needed for both CVE-specific and CVE-relevant programs. Reforming curricula to reduce hate and bias taught to young minds, and including programs to recognize radicalization in a local context would have utility. Additionally, vocational training to improve women's livelihood potential will uplift the general status of women.
- **Access to healthcare, judiciary and law enforcement.** In patriarchal societies like Pakistan, especially in certain regions like Peshawar and Swat, it is not easy for women to access healthcare or report criminal activity without the presence of a male guardian. As extremism has spread through the influence of groups like the Taliban and the Tehrik-e-Taliban-Pakistan (TTP), there have been times when women were even unable to leave their homes by themselves and girls were forbidden from attending school<sup>10</sup>. In situations where there is no male guardian left, female victims and survivors of terrorist attacks have been unable to secure access to basic health facilities by themselves and the government has not provided help or compensation. This has resulted in an increase in support for extremist groups who are able to provide direct

<sup>10</sup> Chatellier, S. and Fayyaz, S. "Women Moderating Extremism in Pakistan," The Institute for Inclusive Security, August 2012

assistance. The lack of enough female police officers also results in a lost opportunity to report criminal activity or terrorism planning.

- **CVE-specific programming for rehabilitation.** Dealing with radicalization towards violent extremism requires CVE- specific programming, not just general education or CVE-relevant programs. Educating women on recognizing signs of radicalization and providing on-ground alternatives and resources to help them protect their family members allows for early warnings before criminal activity takes place. An example of a program launched by a Pakistani woman is Paiman Alumni Trust<sup>11</sup>. This program convinces mothers of youth who are starting to engage in extremism to turn their sons over to a rehabilitation program where they undergo counseling and programs for disengagement and de-radicalization. The youth are also taught vocational skills and placed in jobs by the time they graduate. This initiative is able to use women's networks to find at-risk youth and provide interventions that help protect them. Additionally by providing job placement it is able to reduce poverty for the family itself.
- **Supporting mothers and wives of arrested or dead violent extremists.** In many cases, the person who is arrested or killed is the primary breadwinner of the family. This results in families left with limited resources and options for earning an income. In such cases, it is not unusual for mothers and wives to encourage other men from their families to join extremist causes (e.g. in Yemen<sup>12</sup>). There is a need to include mothers and wives of arrested or dead violent extremists into CVE programs to prevent them from sending (or supporting) more of their family members going towards extremism. This would require education about the threat and the awareness of the unacceptability of the terrorism, as well as an alternative income stream (either through support or vocational training). A legal framework that allows NGOs to engage with women for CVE purposes without fear of being labeled as providing material support is essential<sup>13</sup>.
- **Supporting wives of arrested violent extremists to accelerate rehabilitation.** Government support for wives and families of violent extremists has been seen to impact the openness of the individual towards rehabilitation. In the case of Malaysia, where the families were fully financially supported while the husband was serving a prison sentence for terrorist activities, it was observed that the prisoner was significantly less hostile towards the government after a visit by their spouse. This change in attitude was caused by a combination of shame at their inability to earn to support their own families and also a realization that stereotypes about the government are not necessarily accurate.

<sup>11</sup> Chatellier, S. and Fayyaz, S. "Women Roles in Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Rehabilitation in Pakistan," The Institute for Inclusive Security, August 2012

<sup>12</sup> In Yemen A Woman's Life Entangles with Al-Qaeda, Feb 2012 <http://www.dawn.com/news/1088540/in-yemen-a-womans-life-entangled-with-al-qaeda>

<sup>13</sup> "Women and Terrorist Radicalization- Final Report," OSCE, Vienna, February 2013

- **Social media as an equalizer.** In many patriarchal societies where women have limited voice and agency, social media is a channel for women to express their views and participate in national discussions with fewer societal constraints. Just as we see women who embrace VE growing their online footprint, so too can women increase their CVE activities.
- **Broadcast media as an ally.** In countries like Pakistan where 60% of the female population is illiterate, print media is not a viable medium to convey content. In this case audio or video based programming through broadcast media (e.g. radio, television) would be most effective in reaching the target audience.
- **Long term impact cycles.** Changing values and ideas is not an overnight effort and the achievement of CVE objectives (directly and indirectly) requires long-term commitment to these initiatives. Similar to infrastructure development projects that span multiple years, so should CVE programming. This would require a shift away from annual measures of effectiveness (MOE), measures of performance (MOP) and funding cycles that can constrain the design and implementation of effective programming.

### Conclusion

Supporting increased enrollment in tertiary education by women in Pakistan through the “Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act” (H.R. 3583) is an important step towards improving their role and empowering them to become change-makers in their society.

It will be important for the longer term success of the initiative that beneficiaries not use these scholarships as an opportunity to exit from their society—but rather use this personal development as an investment back into their communities. Serving their communities post-graduation can be built into the conditions of the scholarship.

Investment and reform of the educational system itself, through increased access to primary and secondary education and curricula changes will be instrumental in increasing tolerance and reducing the lure of extremism. These changes would have both direct and indirect benefit to women and to societies grappling with extremism writ large.

Development of CVE- specific, customized local curriculums must be utilized to push back against violent extremism, in addition to CVE-relevant preventative programs. The combination of both CVE-specific and CVE-relevant programs has the ability to build community resilience, empower women and counter extremism in the long term.

In a world where women are especially victimized and oppressed by extremist elements in their societies, it is heartening to see their strength as they transform themselves through education, empowerment and support into becoming an effective line of defense against violent extremism.

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel and Members of the Committee, thank you for your attention, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.



**STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN KUEHNAST, PH.D., DIRECTOR,  
GENDER AND PEACEBUILDING CENTER, UNITED STATES IN-  
STITUTE OF PEACE**

Ms. KUEHNAST. Good morning. I want to thank each of the members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and especially Chairman Royce, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Keating for this opportunity to give testimony.

My name is Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast. I direct the Center for Gender and Peacebuilding at the United States Institute of Peace. The U.S. Congress created the institute 30 years ago with a mandate to prevent, mitigate and resolve violent conflicts around the world.

My statement presented today reflects my own views and does not necessarily represent the views of the Institute of Peace which does not take positions on policy and is prohibited from taking positions on legislation.

I want to make three points related to women and the roles in preventing extremist violence. First, there are excellent policies already in place to support this effort. Second, good work is underway that we can learn from, and third, we can and we must shape better and more effective policies for the future.

In light of the discussion today, it is notable that the U.S. National Intelligence Committee Council's Global Trends 2025 report highlights women as agents of geopolitical change and predicts that the economic and political empowerment of women should transform the global landscape.

In 2011, President Barack Obama issued an executive order that directed the U.S. Government to establish the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

It is mobilizing the different government branches to accelerate the integration of women in shaping, making and implementing security policy and practice.

One of the pillars of the plan promotes women's roles in conflict prevention and early warning and response systems including the roles women play in the prevention of violent extremism. The U.S. Institute of Peace is piloting a project in Nigeria that emphasizes the importance of women's roles in their communities and in their home.

USIP has learned that training in critical thinking and problem-solving skills enables women to combat violent extremism at multiple levels in their society. At home, mothers are often the first to observe the early warning signs of radicalization in their families. While the observation of changing or changed behaviors of their children may be intuitive, for many, the awareness and understanding of the process of radicalization is not. Even if mothers recognize radicalization in their children, they often lack skills needed to intervene.

Women need to be equipped and supported in their efforts to prevent their children from joining extremist groups and also to build their own capacity to reject the influence of extremism and violence. Outside the home, at the community level women can be voices of tolerance and can provide strong counter messages to extremism.

Specifically, in Jos Plateau, Nigerian women religious leaders, both Christian and Muslim, work as mentors in their communities.

As a result of this training, they have expanded their roles to both monitor and provide counseling and guidance to vulnerable youth.

Although the role of women is vital in countering extremist violence, the important role that fathers also play in being change agents and in supporting their daughters' education should be recognized.

In the case of the brave Malala Yousafzai, her education was strongly encouraged by a father who understood that girls should be educated for the good of the child and for her country, even in a very conservative society. It is clear that there is high demand by women for knowledge and skills to prevent violent extremism.

What is needed to shape a responsive effective policies for the future? Improved access for women and girls to education so that they may develop skills, knowledge and self-confidence necessary to be productive participants in their society, develop inclusive policy and practices that focus on the role that women can play in preventing violence and violent extremism, ensure that men are involved in advancing the education for girls and women—fathers can play pivotal roles in supporting their daughters—and develop collaborative partnership among researchers, practitioners and policy makers to bridge divides and develop more innovative approaches.

We know that it is in the interest of the United States to continue to support expanded international opportunities of women and girls as an investment in national and international security and to envision this long-term preventative strategy in the global effort to end violent extremism.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions.  
[The prepared statement of Ms. Kuehnast follows:]



## **United States Institute of Peace**

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An independent institution established by Congress to strengthen the nation's capacity  
to promote peaceful resolution to international conflicts  
...

### **“Engaging and Educating Women and Girls in the Prevention of Violent Conflict and Violent Extremism”**

**Testimony before the  
House Committee on Foreign Affairs**

**Kathleen Kuehnast, Ph.D.  
United States Institute of Peace**

**April 3, 2014**

Good morning and thank you to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman Edward Royce and Ranking Member Eliot Engel, and other members of the committee for this opportunity to testify before you today. This is an important hearing on the need to improve girls' and women's access to education, particularly in countries struggling to combat terrorism. What is at stake here is ensuring that a "whole of society" approach is applied in an effort to both prevent and counter violent extremism.

My name is Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast. I direct the Center for Gender and Peacebuilding at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). The U.S. Congress created the Institute 30 years ago with a mandate to prevent, mitigate and resolve violent conflicts around the world. The Institute does so by engaging directly in conflict zones and by providing analysis, education and resources to those working for peace. USIP experts work on the ground in some of the world's most volatile regions, collaborating with U.S. government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local communities to foster peace and stability. Please note that the views presented today are my own and do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. Institute of Peace, which does not take positions on policy and is prohibited from taking positions on legislation.

I am trained as a socio-cultural anthropologist with expertise on societies in transition, and the political, economic, and social impacts of such changes on men and women. In societies undergoing great upheaval or violent conflict, the roles of women often become a flashpoint, as seen for example in Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran or Pakistan.

This morning I want to make three points related to women and their roles in preventing extremist violence. I will discuss: (1) what policies are in place; (2) what we are currently learning from ongoing efforts; and (3) what we need to do to shape responsive and effective policies for the future.

#### **What policies support women and their roles in preventing extremist violence?**

The U.S. National Intelligence Council (NIC) in its Global Trends 2025 report highlighted women as agents of geopolitical change and predicted that the "economic and political empowerment of women could transform the global landscape."

In 2011, President Barak Obama issued an Executive Order that directed the U.S. Government to establish the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Over the last three years, this plan has served as a road map. It mobilizes the different government branches to accelerate the integration of women in the shaping, making and implementing of security policy and practice.

One of the four pillars of the National Action Plan is promoting women's roles in conflict prevention and improving conflict early-warning and response systems through the integration of gender perspectives. It also focuses on women and girls' health, education and economic opportunity to create the conditions for stable societies and lasting peace.

The Executive Order on Women, Peace and Security, and the ensuing government and civil society activities surrounding this agenda provide the impetus and framework for supporting the roles that women play in the prevention of violent conflict, and more specifically to the theme of today's hearing, in the prevention of violent extremism.

### **What are we currently learning from ongoing efforts?**

Education provides critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills that are essential to understanding how individuals are radicalized and how to counter such extremist messages. Moreover, education instills the self-confidence that is needed for both men and women to contribute to the creation of healthy, resilient and peaceful communities.

The U.S. Institute of Peace is focusing on the broad range of roles women play in the prevention of violent extremism. USIP is piloting a project in Nigeria that emphasizes the importance of women's roles in their communities and home, and the need to build upon local level practices in order to counter trends toward extremism. Specifically in Jos-Plateau, Nigerian women religious leaders, both Christian and Muslim, work as mentors in their communities. As the result of this training, they have expanded their roles to both monitor and provide counseling and guidance to vulnerable youth. From its work in Nigeria, USIP has learned that training in critical thinking and problem solving enables women to combat violent extremism at home, in the community, at the national level, and at the global level.

At home, mothers are often the first to observe the early warning signs of radicalization in their families. While the observation of changing or changed behavior of their children may be intuitive for many, the awareness and understanding of the process of radicalization is not. Even if mothers recognize radicalization in their children they often lack the skills needed to intervene. Women need to be equipped and supported in their efforts to prevent their children from joining extremist groups, and also to build their own capacity to reject the influence of extremism and violence. USIP is working with Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) in Austria, which focuses on building capacity and parenting skills among mothers whose sons are at risk of radicalization. The women meet in what is called, "mothers' schools" where they gain increased awareness and confidence in recognizing the early warning signs of radicalization among their sons. In addition, they learn specific ways to communicate and to use their influence as parents to prevent violent extremism.

Innovative programs to bolster mothers' awareness and skills in this capacity have been underway for several years in Pakistan. For example, the civil society organization PAIMAN Alumni Trust, a grantee of the U.S. Institute of Peace in partnership with Inclusive Security, is doing leading work in this area. It is made up of a network of women leaders who coordinate a community youth and mothers group, training them to identify signs of extremism, and providing support services and economic alternatives for radicalized young men and boys who return to their rural villages to begin a new life.

At the community level, outside the home, women can be voices of tolerance and can provide a strong counter message to extremism in their communities. Women in Nigeria do this through their work in interfaith organizations, hosting local community events to promote tolerance, and counter radicalized interpretations of religious teachings. They work as religious leaders in their communities, pro-actively providing counsel and guidance to vulnerable youth. At the national and global levels, the empowerment of women in media outlets is critical for countering the appeal of extremist messaging. Their very presence in this most public of spheres, including social media, provides a powerful mitigating influence to extremist messaging.

One should not lose sight of the fact that women are also vulnerable to recruitment and extremist messaging, as well as passive enablers of terrorism. In most traditional households, women pass on the ideals and expectations of their society, and in some parts of the Middle East, mothers take comfort in glorifying their son being a suicide bomber. One needs only to look at the war widows of Iraq or the “black widows” of Chechnya for reminders that empowerment can take a negative form.

Although the role of women is vital to countering extremist violence, the important role that fathers also play in being change agents and in supporting their daughters’ education should be recognized. In the case of Malala Yousafzai, her education was strongly encouraged by a father who understood that girls should be educated for the good of the girl and her country – even in a very conservative society.

It is clear that there is a high demand by women for knowledge and skills to prevent violent extremism. Women’s active participation in society, as educated and empowered individuals, as teachers, journalists, faith leaders, healers, and community leaders builds resilience to the influence and spread of violent extremism.

**What is needed is to shape responsive and effective policies for the future?**

- Improved access for women and girls to education so that they may develop the skills, knowledge and self-confidence necessary to be active, productive participants in their society;
- Develop inclusive policy and practices that focus on the role that women play in preventing violence and violent extremism;
- Ensure that men are involved in advancing the agenda of education for girls and women. Fathers can play a pivotal role in supporting their daughters education and empowerment; and
- Develop collaborative partnerships among researchers, practitioners and policymakers to bridge divides and develop more innovative approaches to engage women in the prevention of violent extremism.

I want to re-emphasize the vision of the U.S. National Action Plan which states, “The goal is as simple as it is profound: to empower half the world’s population as equal partners in preventing conflict and building peace in countries threatened and affected by war, violence and insecurity. Achieving this goal is critical to our national and global security.”

It is in the interest of the United States to continue to support expanded international opportunities of women and girls as an investment in national and international security, and to envisage this as a long-term preventative strategy in the global effort to end violent extremism.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer questions.

*The views expressed in this testimony are those of the author and not the U.S. Institute of Peace, which does not take policy positions.*

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you very much.

One of my friends in the Pakistani-American community had shared with me—he is in the IT community—his frustrations with governments in South Asia, across South Asia—India, Pakistan, et cetera—the amount of money that was allocated for education, which I think at the time he was claiming was like 2 percent, and he was contrasting that with, you know, the arms race in terms of nuclear weapons in India and Pakistan and the fact that the societies, the governments themselves, didn't seem to understand that their long-term interests lie with educating their population and educating women and providing them with the ability to—you know. The question is the capacity of governments, I guess, and the willingness of governments around the world to recognize that education for women and girls is important but also to budget for it.

And then there is the second question, which I wanted to ask our first two panelists, and that is for those governments putting money into childhood education, how concerned should we be about their capabilities of doing it effectively? So I will just ask you that question.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Thank you, Chairman. I actually think it is—of course, there is a limited capacity, as you mentioned. If the budget is only 2 percent the capacity is obviously going to be a bit limited and hopefully with international aid and more focus paid on education.

Chairman ROYCE. And those were his figures. They are not mine. I don't know what the real figures are.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Unfortunately, I don't have that statistic with me either.

Chairman ROYCE. But it is—

Ms. MIRAHMADI. If it is close—

Chairman ROYCE. I think his point is probably true.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. What I am actually really concerned about, and I heard some activists from Pakistan here yesterday at the Atlantic Council, was the role that nongovernment organizations in education play on these communities.

So ones that are funded from overseas that have alternative motives in funding these schools, and the religious schools, they may be creating a problem that even if the Central Government is trying to solve and create a very strong secular educational system we need to be careful about what is going on along side it by these other institutions that they don't control.

Chairman ROYCE. Yeah. I think especially some of the Gulf State money that goes into the Deobandi schools. How am I supposed to pronounce that? Deo—

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Deobandi, yes. You and I have been talking about this for almost two decades now. So—

Chairman ROYCE. Well, I have had three trips to Pakistan where I have talked unceasingly about this with the government, and there are 600 schools, which they admit are problematic, and those 600 we have never gotten closed.

There are, you know, tens of thousands of madrasas that educate to some extent, you know, young people in a positive way, but there are 600 schools that we know are doing this and there isn't the political will to confront that faction, either in the legislature or out

in—you know, among the support for the Taliban to get them closed.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. And I think the problem and I understood this from government officials in many countries is that it is not just the education that creates the problem. It is the sense that these communities provide funding, they provide resources, food, social services to the surrounding community—

Chairman ROYCE. Right. Right.

Ms. MIRAHMADI [continuing]. In addition to the kids' education. Chairman ROYCE. Right.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. That it becomes a real difficult social political problem to close that school. Then all those resources going to that community are cut.

Chairman ROYCE. But that is the insight of the Gulf State benefactors, those families who are sending that money because they know that that is the way—

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Exactly.

Chairman ROYCE [continuing]. Then to pull people in and radicalize them.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. The Hamas model.

Chairman ROYCE. Ms. Khan.

Ms. KHAN. I think the latest figures for a place like Pakistan are slightly less than 2 percent is going toward education. So it is actually quite—it is a very bad situation for it.

In terms of where is the most effective money, in studies which have been done they found that the level of—moving from primary to secondary education, if you can actually have secondary education, it actually has a direct impact on the risk of conflict in those areas, and there have been places in Africa where they have seen it actually dropped by almost half if you can actually reduce the education inequality between men and women.

So the need is huge and it actually would have a huge impact. Now, are the governments doing it? No. Is there political will? Not really, because there is enough other—I hate to say excuses, but enough other reasons that they feel that there is other concerns that they would like to focus on instead.

Chairman ROYCE. But you feel that electing more women to office in those countries can help drive this agenda of more money for education because so much of it is going to be allocated to this idea of allowing young women an equal chance at education, right?

Ms. KHAN. Necessary part of it, and I think the other part is also education reform—the curriculum reform itself across all levels. It doesn't matter whether it is primary, secondary or tertiary because there are issues around, obviously, some of the problematic madrasas.

But at the base level, there needs to be educational curriculum reform across the system to reduce the general level of the sense of hate mongering which is happening in many places.

Chairman ROYCE. So an anti-Western curriculum, to pick one example, might be a problem that you have seen in some of the textbooks themselves in South Asia?

Ms. KHAN. It is—yeah. It is things which you need—we need curriculums which promote social cohesion rather than actually em-



phasizing difference and conflict. And so that has to permeate curriculums across the board, not just in madrasas.

Chairman ROYCE. One of the things that I have seen that is pretty inspirational is—especially out of the physician community when you have graduates of, you know, women or men who have doctorates here in the United States, they tend to be tremendously successful in the West and the amount of time and effort they give back to, you know, their education, to their medical schools or to setting up schools in Pakistan, for example.

That is where I think a lot of the insights can come from in terms of people who are enormously successful here and yet are having a hard time figuring out how to work with USAID or our Government in order to leverage their expertise and their hard-earned dollars that they contribute back in order to try to improve society and/or try to increase education and so forth.

I wonder how we could better get USAID to work with the diaspora or with the community here in the United States in meeting these challenges and maybe leveraging these dollars and so forth.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Actually, it is something I mentioned in my written testimony, that we need more cooperation between our Government bodies and the diaspora community. And I know there has been several attempts, and the USAID has a particular office that handled that, but knowing some people that had participated in those conversations, it is often just a very simple discussion.

It doesn't get to concrete examples of how to move these initiatives forward, and I know it happened right before, like this one RFP was coming out and it ended up a \$200 million RFP, and the community responded that there is no way any of us can absorb that kind of an RFP.

You know, if you want us to help and you want us to suggest schools, none of us are capable of that level of commitment and that responsibility. So, I think the relationship kind of broke apart at that point, but it is important to notice that.

Chairman ROYCE. I am trying to set up a dialogue with USAID and I wondered if you could assist me with that on this subject.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Of course.

Chairman ROYCE. We are going to bring in—

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I would be happy to.

Chairman ROYCE [continuing]. Representative communities. I thank you very much. My time has expired. Mr. Keating.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to follow up on the thread that the chairman had started. Obviously, the U.S. is not the only country or group that understands the value of working to empower people through education and through welfare, and extremist organizations are also operating at the local welfare and educational level as well.

I want to follow up to see what can be done to compete with this? Because they are taking a vulnerable population, young people, and indoctrinating them with extremism types of thought. What can we do to deal with that?

Because it is not just us wanting to move forward in these countries. We are competing in some instances with extremist groups that are doing the same thing. Anyone can—

Ms. KUEHNAST. I will answer. Based on my work in Central Asia, I was on the ground when the Soviet Union fell apart and I watched exactly what you are talking about. They are masterful at ground work.

The first thing that they did is they taught English skills. They taught really practical skills that people on the ground needed, where the Western countries were primarily focused on trying to institutionalize from the top down. They were working from the bottom up.

I think we need to somehow, as we are dealing with societies in deep transition or coming out of conflict, we have to keep both parts of this change in our focal point. It is harder to measure the ground.

You need people like social scientists on the ground to be able to track this. But it is incredibly important if you want to make headway and to provide the skills, and in some cases it is food, education, clothing—basic needs in transitional situations.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I think another—of course, the extremists are recruiting, and they are using religion. So the antidote will be religion.

So the difficult part comes as the United States doesn't do religion so it is a very complicated position to be in, though I really believe that, and this is from many, many activists if not hundreds in Pakistan that run mainstream religious institutions and organizations, that they need the skills and the resources to compete.

In other words, if there is a mainstream madrasa right down the street in Multan from an extremist Deobandi madrasa he needs computers to be able to draw students. He needs English language books to be able to compete with him and these are small amounts of money.

But in order to have the capacity to serve students and attract them, he needs to be able to compete with those madrasas. And so it is just us being able to invest in religion, and that makes us uncomfortable.

Mr. KEATING. Ms. Khan had mentioned the difficulty, you know, disproportionately women are illiterate, and it is so hard to communicate the message.

Now, what are the better ways? I know we have, you know, Radio Free Europe, Voice of America. We have social networking. Now, how do you help particularly women who are disproportionately illiterate—get that message to them?

Ms. KHAN. So now this is going to be very, very context specific, because in a place like Pakistan you have very limited permeation of the Internet and social media.

So what you are limited to in most cases is actually mobile technology, which means you have your voice broadcast, you have your audio, your radio, your TV—again, very influential in those societies for sending out messages and that has been done and is being done.

But then you also have anything which can be text-based, which is coming off of phones, and there are certain groups on the ground in Pakistan who are actually using those to put out messages promoting peace and against violence.

If I may actually go back to the previous question a little bit as well is that this is a place where the role of women, if you can actually get them educated or at least be able to start earning an income, it actually changes the dynamics of the family structures, and they are actually empowered to start questioning their family members who might be going down toward extremism.

So it is not just that they are earning money, but the status and their rank and those dynamics have a huge impact. And so when you get education into it, and you can get the messaging into them, what you are doing is, one, their status is raised—they are empowered.

But then they are also—if you can give them the content with which to question, right, and if they are able to question at the very beginning of the signs of radicalization, it is a lot more effective, and this is not just a women's program. It has to be community based for the communities around, not just that family, but around them to support that structure too.

Mr. KEATING. Well, that leads me, lastly—and we are running out of time so—but specifically older women. I know we are gearing in on education and the effect of women who have children that are at an early age for education.

You were touching upon this. How do we get to the older women who are beyond that stage and empower them? Because they have a very important role as well.

Ms. KHAN. Face to face. Face to face. We need more women on the ground because sometimes women are the only ones who actually have access to women in those communities.

So you need to have the women who are going to say this is going to be my drive, my cause, and they will be the ones who will create those safe spaces for education. And I talk about education in the general sense but for CVE-specific programming. We need women empowered to do CVE-specific programming on the ground.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. We go now to Mr. Steve Chabot of Ohio.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for calling this hearing. Promoting women's education throughout the world is incredibly important. I think we would all agree to that.

As the witnesses have noted, countries within South Asia face some of the most challenging barriers to girls' education and poverty is a central reason why millions of girls still miss out on school.

Many of these countries, for example, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, also face socio-cultural factors that further limit girls' accessibility to education. When we discuss how to increase educational and economic opportunities for women in these countries, I believe it is important for us to also address how we define success in basic education because these countries have their own definition sometimes of that term.

How they define success impacts the quality of education these millions of girls are offered. Could the witnesses discuss that issue, how we should be defining success and how in many instances in those countries it may not be what we typically think it ought to

be if we really want to educate these young women to what their future may hold? Ms. Kuehnast.

Ms. KUEHNAST. Yes, thank you very much. Defining success, as my colleague here talked about, is context specific. I don't think we can dictate what is notions of social cultural ideals and ideas about what is successful for a girl or a boy.

I think some of the success though does come in the fact that we begin to allow the space, even ideologically, that girls are worthy of education and that is a harder social cultural notion to shift. That is why fathers are pretty critical in this story board.

We need them to also be part of the change process. Part of the change agency is to engage that whole of community and, in that perspective, help to develop intrinsic sense of what it is to be successful in their respective village, community, state.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you. Since time is relatively brief for us I am going to address my second question to the other two panelists, if that is okay.

Another of the obstacles facing girls in getting an education is fear of potential molestation and harassment on the way to and from school. This greatly impacts their school attendance, access to school, their learning, and their achievement.

Regardless of their age, girls and women in many Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures cannot even leave their household without an adult male family member, for example. We have all heard stories about women who have not done it that way and ended up suffering from sometimes brutal attacks.

As a way to combat this obstacle, Pakistan, for example, undertook a measure to provide scouts to accompany girls and I was wondering if anyone knew if that works, or are there other countries who find ways around some of these cultural barriers and get past the very destructive belief that investing in education for girls to be a waste of resources and, unfortunately, that is a view that is held sometimes in these countries. So if I could perhaps ask Doctor and Ms. Khan also to respond to that.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I am not particularly familiar with the success of the scout program or not, but I know community policing is a valuable tool in our toolbox. Basically there are some difficult relationships to negotiate between communities and their police, and I know our Government and many governments are investing a lot in teaching them community policing models and the importance of them being responsive to their populations.

So I think in the cities in which we have done community policing training there is increased success in the protection of women especially because they are part of those training modules.

So I think expanding and elaborating our community policing models to make sure they protect the rights of women and girls, and especially going to school and getting an education and being able to come to and from work as well, will be an important contribution.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you. Ms. Khan.

Ms. KHAN. Pakistan has started a scheme which is called the Pink Busses, and the idea is to allow transportation which is specific—it is gender segregated so women are actually not harassed and they can actually get from Point A to Point B.

Definitely the lack of—the limited access to transportation to education is a factor and this is, again, one of those schemes which has had limited success because of resources, but they keep—it is enough of a need that they are trying to reinvest in those programs again and again.

There are several other countries which have actually done things like having gender segregated parks or public transportation to allow—you know, to facilitate access.

But in terms of changing minds, right, these are patriarchal societies, and so the people whose opinions have to be impacted are the men, right, and so there is an education aspect which has to be directed toward the men in the society about no, it is important for the women to be educated, and it should not be a threat to them that the women are actually educated.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Joseph Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank Congressman Keating as well for pulling this very important hearing together. First off to the witnesses, thank you for being here. Thank you for your testimony. Most importantly, thank you for what you do. It is extraordinarily important work. It is very difficult work and we are grateful for your commitment to development around the world.

I was a former Peace Corps volunteer. You learn pretty quickly that if you want to get anything done, you go to the women in the community. So it is a lesson that I learned first hand, and if you actually turn around I think you will notice that given the gender dynamics of the room, I think I counted six men in the audience that weren't staff members. So I am glad to know that that lesson is still alive and well in the halls of Capitol Hill.

If I am kind of understanding your testimony and your answers to the questions a bit, yes, money and financial resources are certainly a constraint. They are always going to be a constraint.

But also you are running up against history. You are running up against traditions. You are running up against longstanding, not even institutionalized, but just deep-rooted feelings about how things go and how things are done.

That is made all the more concrete and all the more strengthened, I guess, in sections of the world, even in countries where their access to institutions or institutional players are virtually nonexistent.

Whereas, I think one of you pointed out, religion is sometimes the only or the strongest institution that is present, and in communities that are in either post-conflict or coming out of conflict and stability, people go with who they know and what they know.

And unless you have a long and sustained presence on the ground just to be able to build that trust, it is awfully hard to take on some of these challenges and entrenched, literally deep-held and deep-rooted beliefs that go back generations if not longer. And so I wanted to get your thoughts—you touched a little bit on that bottom down versus—excuse me, bottom up versus top down strategy.

What from a policy perspective should we be doing to strengthen that and if you can—I view this as part of a much larger strategy. You need to keep doing what you are doing.

We need to be far more supportive of what you do but trying to plug away at this in a vacuum, just supporting what you do, I am not so sure we are going to get you where you need to go unless we are also focusing on the context in which you are operating.

So if you could just fill out that picture a little bit I would be grateful.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. So I mentioned briefly the concept of USAID and the size of their grants, and I know—I have heard they have been trying to adjust that. I don't know how far they have gotten.

But empowering local communities requires them to have access to resources, so even if it is not reducing the size, it is just making our larger organizations partner with more organizations, basically providing smaller grants to local partners.

So being able to resource these community efforts, and as I also mentioned using our power as a facilitator to convene some of these people that are doing great work around the world, to talk about their best practices and be able to give those projects a global reach.

For example, Dr. Edah Schleffer does the Mothers Schools. So she takes cities, you know, and goes across cities from across India and Yemen and Nigeria and telling—and creating a network whereby women can learn to intervene in cases where there children have been radicalized. So that experience of a mother of Pakistan is absolutely relevant to the experience of a mother in Nigeria.

So using our power as a convener and as a facilitator is very important as well. And then also just being able to give a floor and an audience to people that are doing community work so those lessons learned can be applied in other countries.

Mr. KENNEDY. Ms. Khan.

Ms. KHAN. So I agree with everything Hedieh said, without a doubt. I think one other thing which is important in terms of for programming itself is that we have to think about it in terms of long-term perspective.

You are trying to change people—the way people think, some of the cultural norms perhaps but more so the values, right. You are trying to instill a sense of what is right and wrong, you know, more on peace, less on conflict.

This takes time. So when you end up in a situation where programs are funded and these annual—you know, there is annual funding and the question is the program itself needs to run for several years.

Sometimes the cycle of funding and the cycles for evaluation the MOEs and MOPs can actually hinder the implementation of the programming itself. So just like in development—infrastructure development projects they span years.

We have to think about women's education, especially in this realm, in the same way. This is not a short-term thing. This is a long-term commitment which requires everyone to play a part.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you. Doctor, if you can, briefly.

Ms. KUEHNAST. Very briefly, I wanted to say in terms of the policy-shaping story board, one of the things we want is definitely best practices, but we need lessons learned. We did an assessment on women's programming in Iraq and Afghanistan and we found three things that need to be considered.

We need to step outside the urban area and not only deal with elite women but also rural or agriculturally-based communities. We need to engage religious leaders in these change processes and, finally, we actually—and this came through all of these assessments we did—we have to engage men in the training as well.

We are not going to change a whole of society by only focusing on women as perhaps the victims or the problems here. We need to change minds and hearts as a community.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Doctor. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the extra time.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. George Holding of North Carolina.

Mr. HOLDING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Having the school programs for girls and women in Afghanistan and Pakistan is one side of the coin but, you know, making sure that the security situation in those countries is in such a state to allow them to achieve their mission.

You know, my colleague, Mr. Chabot, mentioned some parts of the security situation but, you know, with the draw down of forces in Afghanistan and the region overall our withdrawal, you know, I am concerned about the security situation. The chairman mentioned the threat of, you know, groups such as the Taliban to these schools—you know, suicide bombers, you name it, trying to eradicate these schools by violence and any means necessary.

Do you think the security situation will be such to allow the schools to carry out their mission? And I will let whoever wants to address that first to go ahead.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Well, I presented our members—I hope you had a copy of our report on Afghanistan post-2014 but, according to our researchers and the field work we did, the security concern is more for Westerners than it is for locals in the sense that though schools do get attacked but life goes on in Afghanistan.

And so it is very important for us, as our military budget in Afghanistan decreases, that we increase our civil society budget, empowering civil society leaders and communities to do their grass-roots programming and continue education and programs for women that they do well and have done for years since we have been investing there.

So I think we have to understand a certain risk will be inherent in these activities. But life for the most part will go on for Afghans, and we have to continue that investment for our national security interests. We don't want to just hand the country back over to the Taliban.

Mr. HOLDING. Right. But, you know, the security concern itself—I mean, just yesterday a suicide bomber took out six Afghan police officers at a police station. So you think about a police station as a target, it should probably be a pretty hard target, you would think.

A school might be a soft target. So there is very real security concerns there and yes, you could just imagine the horror at a massacre at a school for girls—being massacred for doing precisely what you encourage them to do.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I can tell you a bigger fear in Afghanistan is that the United States would turn its back. So more than they fear the roadside bomb, they fear that we will no longer be interested

in them. So I think it is really important for us to stay focused on these civil society initiatives.

Mr. HOLDING. So, I mean, a draw down of our forces—military forces in Afghanistan, I mean, what message is that sending to the people that you are talking about?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. They are very concerned. I mean, across the country they were very concerned about what the draw down means. So though, of course, they want the skirmishes to stop but they are most concerned with whether that means we will no longer have an interest in their future and their prosperity and their—

Mr. HOLDING. Right. It is just hard for me to see if we draw down our military presence in Afghanistan, how you can continue with a—you know, civil society programs without the military there to protect the programs.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I am sorry, but I beg to differ. A lot of these communities are doing really, really well without our military intervention and being able to continue these programs, especially outside of Kabul. So I have a very strong sense that they would be able to continue, assuming that they have the resources to continue.

Mr. HOLDING. Good. Glad to hear it. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Holding.

We go to Dr. Ami Bera of California.

Mr. BERA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses. Everything you say is buried in my own story. My mom emigrated from India in the 1950s, went to school in the '40s as a female. It was unheard of in her village but only was allowed to do so because she had a father that thought it was important.

So I think it is incredibly important and then had a father that supported her, emigrating to the United States to continue her education along with my father. I am the youngest of three boys.

My mom became a public school teacher, and this is incredibly personal as a father of a daughter as well. You know, when I returned to India in August as a Member of Congress we had a chance to visit an organization in Mumbai called SNEHA. It is run by professional women, focused on the slums in Mumbai, and they specifically pointed out in our conversation that one of their key strategies is to work with boys.

And I think all three of you mentioned the importance of getting to men—to boys early and over time, changing the value and the culture of how they view girls and women. Certainly, they are working with girls but I would not under estimate that just focusing on girls will not lead to the long-term change that we would like to see and I would be curious both in Pakistan and Afghanistan as well, if you want to expand on that. Maybe, Doctor, you could start.

Ms. KUEHNAST. Certainly. This has been something that has come out of our research—that women's programming inclusive of girls is more successful when men are engaged and are change agents in the process.

I would say also societies coming out of a violent conflict are particularly vulnerable to this concept of hyper masculinities where they have a gun, and it helps establish their status.



How do we start unlearning that kind of violence? That is a whole set of educational training processes, that include curriculum change, that is vital for a new identity of what it means to be a really holistic man in society beyond the gun in which once their identity was established. It goes hand in hand as a holistic society.

Mr. BERA. Ms. Khan, would you like to expand on that?

Ms. KHAN. Again, I agree with Dr. Kuehnast entirely. I think because we are trying to change all of society, necessarily the young boys have to be included. But that is actually a place where mothers are very influential, right, because they are the ones who—for the first formative years are the ones who are—they are the ones who—they are the guardians of culture and social norms, right.

So they are actually able to impart those values, right, which means they have to learn it themselves, that actually women's education is important, that the young man who is going to grow up has to recognize it is important for his sisters, for the women around him, and he has to be a part of helping that.

Your mother's story, your story, is actually very similar to mine. The reason I was able to come here when I was 16 to start university was because my father was behind it. There is no way it would have happened without full support that okay, no, education is important enough for you to take—you know, to break social norms and make that difference.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. One Nigerian activist said the home is the first school and the mother is the first teacher. So, again, as my colleagues have said, it is very important to be dealing with both sides of the population at once and to make sure that the women are empowered and educated and being able to influence their children and then being able to influence the dynamic in their home and thereby within their communities. So I think both genders are very, very important to further this agenda.

Mr. BERA. Great. Since I am short on time another aspect that we have had a hearing on in our subcommittee is on sex-selective abortion and really moving it out of the realm of reproductive rights but into the realm of really educating populations on the value and worth of girls as well. And that probably is more of a public relations effort and, you know, certainly, in India you are seeing some of it. Do you have any recommendations on that or thoughts on, again, how you change that value?

Ms. KUEHNAST. Well, both in talking about security and then this point that you bring up, in some ways we lack imagination in the way that we can use technology and social platforms for productive means. I think that we sometimes overfocus on the security side without being imaginative to how to get around these problems.

And, certainly, when it comes to education we have opportunities through cell phones, through other means and, certainly, television and radio. I think, you know, we don't think enough about that kind of public relations.

Mr. BERA. Right. Thank you, and thanks for helping us imagine.

Chairman ROYCE. We are going to go now to Randy Weber of Texas.

Mr. WEBER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Mirahmadi—is that how you say that? You said that in some of your comments that

the extremists use religion and then, if I got it down correctly, you followed that up by saying the antidote is religion. Then you followed that with the problem is United States doesn't use religion. Dear God, what are we doing?

What—if the antidote is religion what does that look like? You said the United States doesn't use religion. Expound on that. Would you prefer—expound on that.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. No, I have no intention of changing the Constitution. England does religion but the issue—

Mr. WEBER. Well, the Constitution doesn't prevent us from using religion. Let me just make sure we get that out there. Go ahead.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Okay. Well, it is just that the manipulation of ideology is within the context of religion, so the response to that manipulation and deviation is the correct interpretation of their religion, and in order to do that we need to empower a certain segment of the society, religious leaders, faith leaders, to be able to impart that proper narrative to their communities.

They already are doing it. They are just competing against some of these extremists and deviant institutions. So it would be useful if the United States was a little more comfortable in allowing them to do what it is they already do and be able to do programming in that department.

But over the years—I have been doing this 20 years—and over the years I have just heard a number of discussions about how that is just something the U.S. is not comfortable in doing.

So parts of Europe, I know, do all these kind of programming quite regularly but that is just not something that we are necessarily comfortable with. I know USIP also had some faith leader engagement and some programs that Dr. Kuehnast can talk to. But maybe over time we will understand how important ideology is in this threat and we will find ways—innovative ways of being able to empower the counter narrative.

Mr. WEBER. Well, that is a fascinating idea. You are saying that there are those who are already countering that religious extremism.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Absolutely.

Mr. WEBER. How are they doing that?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. As I mentioned, with the proper interpretation of religion—

Mr. WEBER. All right. Give us that proper interpretation.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. So, for example, jihad. Is jihad valid? Is jihad in the country against civilians valid? The mainstream teacher says no, it is not. There is no declaration of jihad by the state authority. These are noncombatants. We cannot kill them.

There are very valid mainstream interpretations. We have written a lot about these that are out there, that they are trying to promulgate. But they don't have the resources compared to the extremist groups. They are outfunded, outmanned.

Mr. WEBER. Are these teachers in the educational system or are these teachers in the mosques and the different religious organizations?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. A lot of them run religious institutions in these countries. But some of them are university professors and are in

other institutions as well, in CSOs—in civil society organizations, outside of religion.

Mr. WEBER. Is this a growing trend?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I would like to think so. We are a lot better off than we were 20 years ago. There is a lot more people empowered with those counter narratives and willing to have the courage to speak up. Because, remember, in these countries that is dangerous. That is a dangerous business. But I believe we are better off than we were 20 years ago toward this threat.

Mr. WEBER. Thank you. Ms. Khan, do you agree with her statement that the antidote is religion?

Ms. KHAN. I think there is a role for religion to be played when you are talking about for the antidote for ideologically inspired extremism. Extremism, or engagement in violent extremism, happens for many different reasons and not all of them are ideological, right. It comes through—people get involved in kinship. There is multiple reasons why people engage.

Mr. WEBER. But would you say that most of them come through religious extremism?

Ms. KHAN. No, actually. I would disagree with that and that is where it becomes very context specific because you have certain areas where, because a family member is involved, therefore he or she is able to pull in other family members and then network into it, and the reason they get initiated into it is not because of ideology but because of kinship ties.

Now, they might get indoctrinated post-involvement in the group but it happens afterwards. So because radicalization or the ideological radicalization is not the starting point in all of them, it is, again, a very contextual thing. Now—

Mr. WEBER. Okay. Thank you. I want to go over here.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. That is absolutely correct what she said.

Mr. WEBER. What she said.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I didn't mean it is not the only factor.

Mr. WEBER. No, I got that.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Ideology and theology is not the only factor at all.

Mr. WEBER. And is it Dr.—pronounce your last name. Kuehnast—weigh in on that. What is your thought?

Ms. KUEHNAST. On the antidote?

Mr. WEBER. Mm-hmm.

Ms. KUEHNAST. Well, I would say that I agree with Ms. Khan here that if we are talking about violent extremism that it is maybe one part of the narrative that we should focus in on.

I do think that there are ways that peacebuilding and peace-making can be a part of the narrative. We can train and expose leaders of religious faith to these other narratives about peacebuilding. This is something that we have worked on at the Institute of Peace for 20 years to bring religious leaders together to understand through a peacebuilding lens versus a religious lens what it means to listen, to cooperate and build a peaceful community.

Mr. WEBER. Do you teach in that process a respect for the sanctity of life?

Ms. KUEHNAST. Do we teach—I am not a trainer in that but we teach to——

Mr. WEBER. I mean, if you are going to have peace, I mean, isn't the ultimate goal not to kill somebody else? That is not very peaceful.

Ms. KUEHNAST. Training is really focused on building healthy communities, healthy families, and sustaining peaceful processes of that community.

Mr. WEBER. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We are going to have to go, I think, to Mr. Cicilline of Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much to our witnesses for your testimony. As you know, in many areas some of the most extreme organizations, or extremist organizations, often provide important social services and act as local welfare and education agencies, and I wondered if you sort of recognized that that presents special challenges in terms of not ensuring a particularly young and vulnerable generation of girls and young women become radicalized, if you have seen good examples of policy around that, what we should do as, you know, in our relationships with these organizations or these countries. Have there been some countries that have done that successfully and provided good educational opportunities and separated it from the kind of radicalization that the underlying organization promotes? And I don't know if—start with you, Doctor.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. It is a very complicated problem. You see now with Egypt, you see in Palestine, in Lebanon, separating the social welfare component of these organizations is very difficult and, quite frankly, I haven't seen models of it being done well.

One of the recommendations we make quite often is teaching the mainstream secular prominent CSOs in disaster humanitarian relief in terms of when there is a flood or some other kind of natural disaster so it is not just the extremist groups that are on the ground but also developing social welfare components of their institutions.

So they need to understand how effective this model is and be empowered to do the same. So I think so far that has been our best recommendation, especially from activists on the ground.

Mr. CICILLINE. Ms. Khan.

Ms. KHAN. Examples—good examples, well, perhaps not that many. I think one thing I would like to highlight is that there are certainly NGOs who are working on the ground who are trying to provide some of the social welfare instead of the extremist organizations.

But in those contexts you have to recognize that they are going to be entering a space where there are extremists in those communities, which means in certain cases NGOs are very restricted in what they can or cannot do because of legal constraints. Because if you are engaging with a particular community where some of the people, for example, might be a family member of someone who has engaged in violence, they don't want to have to worry about issues of where it is now you are providing material support for terrorism. So there is actually—it ends up being a very scary space for certain, at least external, NGOs to operate.

Local NGOs are able to work that better and I think there is a need to actually work with a lot of the locals who are able to navigate some of those spaces. But in terms of the social welfare, I mean, everyone has that arm, right?

[Foreign language spoken] they are not—they claim they are not a terrorist organization but LET is. It is very messy.

Mr. CICILLINE. Yes. Doctor.

Ms. KUEHNAST. I think some of the best examples that I have seen actually aren't about the counter narrative. They are about skill sets. One group is Peace Through Business that work with Afghan and Rwandan women.

Learning a trade, learning a skill, learning how to actually produce something that then you can build into a business is an incredibly empowering process. It creates inherent leadership in that community and creates a different imagination for what is possible for both boys and girls, men and women.

And I think sometimes we can overfocus on the issue and not think about other spaces that can counter those kind of narratives. A great example is building skills like business skills for women.

Mr. CICILLINE. And I don't have a lot of time left and if you have thoughts about this that you can't provide today, I would love to hear them at some future time. But it seems to me the other challenge we face is that women and girls are very often seen very active in kind of the grassroots efforts in a lot of countries that we are speaking about and the question about how we see more women in senior positions of responsibility in government and at the negotiating table and, you know, in places where their presence will be noticed among the group that they are in but also in the larger community and what strategies we might support to help advance women in those important senior positions would be particularly helpful, I think. Yes.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I think making sure they are on the guest list. So I know when government offices are arranging conferences or participating, include more female activists and speakers, and so eventually when we help elevate their profile and other countries elevate their profile they become players.

And I think that their own governments then also begin to recognize them. And remember, a lot of Muslim countries do have women leaders and women in politics—Pakistan, in particular, Bangladesh. So it isn't a stretch to include women. I think it is just the rest of us being conscious of including them in the peace processes and especially in counter terrorism and security as well.

Mr. CICILLINE. Good suggestion. Thank you. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Cicilline. We go now to Lois Frankel of Florida.

Ms. FRANKEL. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for bringing this issue today. Thank you to the panel. It has been very interesting. Malala was here in Washington last year, and she is a very courageous young lady and very inspiring.

But I have a number of questions that I would like to ask you. So first of all, I think it is quite obvious that more women will be mothers than just leaders, so my first question would be, does any

of your research show a correlation between mothers being educated and having extremist children?

There was a comment about the importance of the curriculum being a certain type of curriculum. I think one of you made mention of that, and Pakistan, I think, has 175 million people. Is that correct? More than that.

So I wanted to get your sense of the impact of these kind of scholarships we are going to be talking about today because I think we all agree it is fair—it is only fair that women get at least half.

But the question I have for you is what do you think the impact of the scholarships are and what would you say would be some of your top initiatives—some other things that we can do in addition to scholarships? Any one of you could start.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. So I am sorry. The question about being educated and having extremist kids meaning that if they were educated they would not have extremist kids? Okay.

Ms. FRANKEL. Yes.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. I presume that is what you meant. But I don't know of any studies about actually how many were able to decrease the radicalization of their children, but there are definitely studies which I cite in my written testimony about the impact that educated women will have on preventing the radicalization of their children. So it is very, very important, and I stress secular and mainstream religious education.

So it is important for them not only to understand, you know, the secular sciences and to be educated and knowledgeable women but to also understand that when their kid, you know, is moving toward a radicalized interpretation of the faith they can recognize it and be able to interdict.

Ms. FRANKEL. Let me just stop you for 1 second. Are you saying that if women are steered toward the wrong kind of education it will not have the effect that we would like? In other words, if it is not mainstream religious, if it is not secular, that it could have a detrimental effect?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Well, I mean, as I mentioned in my testimony about the soft radicalization of women, this is a phenomenon that I have described to others that women who are taught a very—a deviant or austere or very rigid interpretation of the religion, they can pass that on to their children.

So they won't—they will not be—they will be perpetrators and helpers rather than interdictors. So we definitely want to understand the quality and the kind of education that they are getting. That is definitely important.

And then the curricula that I mentioned in particular, because Humera also mentioned curricula, was that we needed to have tolerant peacebuilding curricula like the one that Dr. Amina is doing in Lahore, is emphasizing the importance of a cross cultural education.

In fact, former Prime Minister Tony Blair has also talked about this—having respect for societal pluralism, respect for other denominations, religions and races, that this kind of tolerance is an important part of curricula, secular or religious.

Ms. FRANKEL. Did someone want to comment on the effectiveness of merit and need-based scholarships?

Ms. KHAN. Anytime you can get more women educated that is a good thing. It helps society. There is nowhere—you know, it just helps society and it actually does have—it has secondary and tertiary impacts also. Just the benefits are numerous, right.

There is no question about that. I think one thing which would really help, or in addition to the scholarships, is if part of the scholarship can also require a commitment back into the community. So it is not just that they get educated—they get the education—but some sort of commitment that they will actually serve their communities in particular and, again, that will come back to in terms of what are the areas that the scholarships are available for, right, and what are we trying to actually promote.

Because you can have women—you know, you can talk about you want more women to do—to become teachers but you can also have women who will eventually end up in leadership roles or in politics or there is different types of topics or subject areas that you would emphasize depending on how you would like to in the long term channel the empowerment of women.

Ms. KUEHNAST. And I would like to pick up on that idea of what I would call “paying it forward” in terms of the scholarships, that the recipients of the scholarship are also committed to giving back in some sort of way to their community and providing mentorship to others so that you really spread the access of the knowledge of that particular person among many.

I have actually seen it working in action, again, through the Peace Through Business. It is a profound way of getting these kind of resources stretched over many people but also over time. You want this to last a while.

Ms. FRANKEL. Thank you. Mr. Chair, would that—these sound like very good suggestions. Is that something that this committee could entertain as this legislation moves forward?

Chairman ROYCE. Absolutely, Ms. Frankel, and remember we have a markup following the hearing. Okay.

Thank you. We are going to go to Tulsa Gabbard of Hawaii.

Ms. GABBARD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Aloha and good morning. Thank you for being here and for speaking so candidly about the work that you are doing and the effects that you are seeing and also talking about where we can and need to be doing more.

I have three questions I am going to try to ask quickly and see if you can try to address them. Just following up on Mr. Holding’s questions about the necessity of security going forward when there is NGO work or work that is still being done on the ground, knowing that our military presence from Afghanistan is diminishing greatly.

My second question is with regards to the female engagement teams in Afghanistan, in particular, what kind of impacts do you think that they have had? And lastly, as you are looking at communicating with these different generations of women what are some of the different approaches that you are taking, for example, with, you know, young girls—girls who are growing up, going through high school or young women, as opposed to the generation before them of their mothers and grandmothers where, you know, as a 16-year-old you might be very active perhaps in social media whereas,

you know, their mothers or grandmothers would view things and be empowered in a completely different way.

Dr. Mirahmadi, I will let you start. Thank you.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. So security going forward, this is going to be a difficult problem, especially for U.S.-based NGOs working in Afghanistan. So one of the suggestions that we have put in our report that you should have on the table is about hiring and using local NGOs to facilitate the M&E, monitoring and evaluation and implementation, because, as I mentioned, Afghans—for Afghans this is business as usual—life will go on—and they really need our continued attention and focus on building that infrastructure, continuing in the capacity building of civil society, and they really would like to see those initiatives continue. So—

Ms. GABBARD. On that, you know, there has been a lot of talk and concern about corruption within the government there. Is their level of confidence greater in these local NGOs than there is in government?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Absolutely. Absolutely. I mean, it is a different dynamic between the local communities and what happens in Kabul. So they also have a lot of mistrust of the Central Government.

So I think it is a—there are a lot of—and actually we have done a report that lists 100 potential CSOs that are partners—potential partners for the United States. We have actually vetted these organizations to provide them as possible alternative partners, and they do have—I mean, they don't have the fiscal good governance and some of the structures that we would like to see as an American-based organization, but if we build their capacity a bit I am sure we can get there and they could be a very valuable resource for our projects going forward.

And then one other thing I would comment on is the difference between the youth and the older generations. Of course, the older generations are worried about their kids and their grandkids. So it is always effective to reach out to them in terms of being that first line of defense for their children.

But with young people I find they are very focused on empowerment and leadership. So they want to learn from us how to be better leaders and how to learn to be leaders in their communities and in their societies, whether it is political or at the community level.

So I think empowering them in that way is very important. And then Internet safety—teaching them responsible uses of the Internet, understanding digital citizenship, understanding that what they put out there stays with them forever and that the comments that they post and what they allow people to post back is relevant too. So those are things that we—

Ms. GABBARD. Thank you. Dr. Kuehnast, do you have anything to add?

Ms. KUEHNAST. I would like to comment on your question about the female engagement teams in Afghanistan. About a year and a half ago at the U.S. Institute of Peace, we hosted an off-the-record discussion with members of the various militaries on the FETs and it proved to be very interesting.



I think overall many who were female engagement team members found it a very enriching experience but were frustrated that oftentimes their work was not integrated in the operations overall.

And I do remember one Marine saying what is key moving forward: These efforts have to be operationally integrated or else it becomes a silo. It is an interesting study project but it really has to be seen in that command center.

Ms. GABBARD. Yes. Thank you. That is such an important point, just to recognize and to be able to see things in a broader way than just beyond the very focused kind of military tactical look and see how these relationships are impacted and how it really benefits that common objective at the end of the day.

Thank you very much.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Grace Meng of New York.

Ms. MENG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Ranking Member Keating and to all of our panelists for being here today and the important work that you do.

I just want to add on to the conversation from before. In some areas, extremist organizations also operate as local welfare and education providers, leading to increased indoctrination of a vulnerable youth population.

How can the U.S. effectively achieve its goals in areas where education is provided by such extremists, and are there any successful examples that might serve as models for this? And anyone can answer.

Ms. KUEHNAST. I will speak from my experience working in international development. Some of the best efforts I saw happening in Central Asia where all of this kind of, as you say, local welfare was being imported from outside of their world and there was great need, of course.

But I think when we move this kind of effort to community-driven development so that the communities have access to the funding, and it doesn't get caught always in newly-forming institutional structures, especially those countries that are coming out of conflict. There are not the kind of institutions that can really funnel that funding.

So we need to find mechanisms that are more community based that can help get the needs answered as a way to, in one sense, counter this kind of local welfare, as you pointed out.

Ms. MENG. My second question is regarding efforts to promote women's education and self-empowerment. I have heard of one example where in 2007 the state of Bihar in India began providing bicycles to teenage girls to help them get to school because their trip was either too far or too costly.

The number of girls who registered for high school tripled in the first 4 years of the program and it was so successful that other Indian states started similar programs. An unexpected benefit was that it also raised the status of girls and their families in their villages.

All the members of the family could use this bicycle to get groceries, run errands, and make the lives of everyone in those families better. How do we work more closely with some of these local governments and develop initiatives to promote women's access to

education with local level governments and knowledge and at the same time being culturally sensitive?

Ms. KUEHNAST. All right. I will weigh in. Again, that is a wonderfully imaginative approach to trying to answer a bigger question about accessing education. We need more examples like that.

We need more examples in our own agencies to think outside the box, if you will. We sometimes reproduce our own bad ideas. As we talk about critical thinking and problem solving we need to apply the same and take risks in different ways to approach very practical everyday issues with a new lens in mind. That is, again, where I think sometimes communities are their best asset in terms of that kind of problem solving.

Ms. KHAN. I think I would really like to echo the last point Dr. Kuehnast made. If you ask communities how to solve their own problems, they actually will come up with answers, and the answers they come up with are usually the ones which are going to stick the best because they own the solution.

But in many cases, if we try to define here is your problem and here is the solution and you guys should just do it, it actually doesn't stay. And so in these communities actually getting—using the communities to solve or to come up with solutions is actually very effective, and this is a place where youth are very effective because they want to engage.

And if they actually—you know, if they come up with ideas and they start to see them being implemented, it gives them a greater investment back into the improvement of their own societies.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. And actually we did this in Afghanistan so we had local development councils that we created to help bring the community members together to talk about what initiatives they wanted to put forward, and it was extremely successful and I don't see why we couldn't do that in other countries as well.

So it is bringing together the local partners and stakeholders and asking them for their input on project ideas and then having a democratic mechanism to choose which ones will be implemented and then being responsible for the monitor and evaluation of its success.

So I think that having them—a community-based solution and having them as part of the development and implementation is really important.

Ms. MENG. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. We go to Gerry Connolly of Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and with permission I would like to—I would like to yield to my colleague, Mr. Sherman, and come back.

Chairman ROYCE. Without objection.

Mr. SHERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. In fairness, if we could start over Mr. Sherman's time, Mr. Chairman. Could we start back at five?

Chairman ROYCE. Not to worry.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you.

Mr. SHERMAN. One thing I have been advocating on this committee for a long time is that we put our development and foreign

aid dollars into printing textbooks. First, it is helpful to support education.

Second, it gives us control of the values that underlie the message in those textbooks. We would have to be careful. I mean, if I was writing the textbooks I might put in the Chapter 14 great things you would love about Israel.

I am not sure that the programs you work with would find wide acceptance for the book that I would write. A third element is corruption. If we are providing free textbooks or extremely low-priced textbooks and somebody steals them, who are they going to sell them to?

If we go into a country and are providing those same textbooks free to most parents—and also a textbook can be marked, and you can put a hologram in it or a code in it and trace it so, you know, whereas rice or money or whatever can be stolen more easily. To what extent do textbook costs cause parents to either not send their kids to school or not send their kids to school for as many years as they might otherwise, or to send some of their children to school but decide others will not go to school?

What is—and I realize it is different from country to country but are textbook costs a barrier to education? Yes, Doctor.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Thank you for the question. I actually love the idea of textbooks. So a number of our activists in Pakistan especially have asked for textbooks.

Of course, the content and subject matter of the textbooks is very relevant and what we—as you mentioned, what we would put in the textbooks. And, unfortunately, I was part of a project that was overlooking the textbooks we were sending to Afghanistan in the beginning of the war, and you would be horrified by what was in the content of the textbooks we printed. So they were simply a reproduction of old Afghani textbooks—counting Kalashnikovs.

Mr. SHERMAN. Kalashnikovs.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. So it is important—the content is important. So we would have to—we would have to make sure that we were, you know, very clear about what we expected to have in that content. But I think it is an extremely wonderful tool, especially for existing institutions. As to sending them to homes and families, I am not sure about how that would—

Mr. SHERMAN. Well, I mean, there are many places in the world where the parents have to pay for the textbooks. Do you have experience in operating in those countries, and do those textbook costs deter parents from sending their kids to school?

Do—if you don't have—I can go on to the next question if there isn't—I don't see anybody answering that—okay. Let me go on to the next one.

Obviously, what we would want to see is a qualified teacher teaching a class of 20 or fewer students. We have got very limited resources here but we do have new technology.

Are any of you aware of situations where computer programs, lectures, available on Tablet, through the Internet or on disc, have been made available to those who don't have traditional classroom education available, and do you have any success stories or failure stories? Dr. Kuehnast.

Ms. KUEHNAST. I am familiar with some of these new approaches to education. The U.S. Institute of Peace has online courses on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, looking at——

Mr. SHERMAN. Anything in local languages that helps kids learn how to read and basic skills?

Ms. KUEHNAST. No, but it helps the teachers.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay.

Ms. KUEHNAST. And it helps teachers prepare and they are being translated into key languages. We also have a global peacebuilding center focused on——

Mr. SHERMAN. I want to squeeze in one more question. My proposals to raise billions of dollars in tax revenue have insufficient Republican support. We don't have a lot of money.

Is there anything we are doing in the development and education area that you say, hey, that is not the best use of funds—maybe those funds could be steered somewhere else? Can you identify for us any programs that aren't working or are misconceived? Yes, Ms. Khan.

Ms. KHAN. Perhaps this could be something we could include in our—in the——

Mr. SHERMAN. I look—yes, I would like you all to respond for the record to those questions that time did not permit you to respond to orally, and I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. We will go now to Mr. Gerry Connolly. But first, will the gentleman yield, Mr. Sherman? For one thought of a way to do this without tremendous expense would just be to take expired textbooks here in the United States that are effective texts, ship them back in some of the empty shipping containers that you and I have talked about, going back to South Asia, but use them and then have an ongoing program to do this.

That is something that could be done at minimal cost. Those textbooks otherwise would have to be destroyed here in the United States. And yet they are very effective, you know, for teaching any number of disciplines. Maybe that is something we could work on as we move forward.

Ms. MIRAHMADI. And I have a number of schools you can send them to.

Chairman ROYCE. There we go. We just have to know who to work with. Let us go to Mr. Connolly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. The title of this hearing is "Women's Education: Promoting Development, Countering Radicalization." Is there clear correlative evidence, Dr. Mirahmadi, that the education of women helps counter radicalization?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. There have been a number of studies which I cite to in my written testimony from the OSCE, from Naureen Chowdhury Fink and the Center for Global Security, also for the Pakistan Center for Peace Studies.

There are a number of studies about the importance and the correlation between women being educated and preventing the radicalization of their children. Now, is it a causal link? I am not—I can't speak to that. But there are a number of studies that talk about the importance of that.

Mr. CONNOLLY. To what extent does the promise of education get dashed on the shoals of other cultural barriers? For example, you could have broad-based education in Saudi Arabia but they are still not going to drive. You know, there will still be blatant discrimination in the workplace. Opportunities will be thwarted. You will—you know, your social comportment will be highly regulated.

To what extent does in some ways education either undermine that system or get terribly thwarted by cultural norms that seem by Western standards to hold women back, to deny them opportunity and integration into the broader society?

Ms. MIRAHMADI. Well, I think one of the important points at the topic of this discussion was about how they could prevent radicalization. So educated women for sure can be the first line of defense for their husbands and their children and their families.

So it is very important that they understand the warning signs of radicalization and then be empowered with the tools to respond. So in that field, in particular, an education is vital. It is critical.

In terms of the larger socio-cultural dynamics, it is important to push some of those limits. I think moving into the 21st century by empowering women and giving them more space—more public space to express themselves and to be educated, to get jobs, to be involved in politics, we are going to push some of those social cultural barriers, and I think that is a good thing.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I probably do too but to what extent—I am trying to look at ourselves—

Ms. MIRAHMADI. And I believe Pakistani women believe that too.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes. But to what extent, and feel free, other panelists as well, but to what extent is that a culturally-bound norm on our part? To what extent are—the very thing you just asserted, to what extent is that a Western norm being interposed on other cultures? Yes, Ms. Khan.

Ms. KHAN. Education is a human right for all, not based on gender. But everyone has a right to education and yes, there are cultural barriers to it and cultural constraints in certain contexts. But at the same time, it is the right of women to get education.

So we must pursue that no matter what. I think it has been mentioned a few times by all of us that there is a role for men in making sure that women are able to get their education and so when we are coming up against a barrier, right, it is not just for women to fight on the behalf of women.

You also need the support of all of community and all of society, which includes the men. Men can actually be some of the loudest voices to make sure that women do have access to education and all other types of opportunities as well.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And that is—part two is what I am particularly—it seems to me—I would agree with you about education, but we also have to add opportunity because otherwise what I am focused on is we have a whole educated class who can't go anywhere because these other social cultural barriers prevent opportunity.

If you are going to have education you got to have opportunity that goes with it. Otherwise, I think you have a very volatile, unhappy mix.

Ms. KHAN. Yes. Yes, and I think part of it is also the types of education because, you know, we can talk about standard primary,

secondary, tertiary education. But there is also a place for vocational skills and actually skills in terms of things like managing a business—how to actually start your own business.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Right.

Ms. KHAN. Actually a skill set which can be used to create opportunities, and so that also has to be part of that education mix, which is very functional skill building.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Dr. Kuehnast, did you wish to comment?

Ms. KUEHNAST. I would just say that education is a long-term investment in long-term change in societies, whether it is locally or globally, and it is something that is an investment. And so sometimes, as you have pointed out, cultural norms create barriers for opportunities.

But it is a long-term effort to change those norms. I think we see that in the last century the kinds of norms that have changed as a result of women's education including, in our own country 100 years ago this year, the right to vote.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes. We don't want to have a whole bunch of Ph.D.s with nothing to do. Thank you so much for being here today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you very much, Mr. Connolly. I thank the members.

We are adjourning this hearing but we want to really express our appreciation, Mr. Keating and I, to our three witnesses who travelled some distance to be with us today and we very much appreciate their testimony.

[Whereupon, at 11:56 a.m. the hearing was adjourned.]

Chairman ROYCE. So the hearing is adjourned, and now we are going to call the committee to order for a different purpose. We will give our witnesses 1 minute to get their paperwork together.

The committee will come to order. Pursuant to notice, we meet today to mark up H.R. 3583, the Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act.

Without objection, all members may have 5 days to submit statements for the record and to put in any extraneous materials on this bill in for the record, and I now call up the bill, H.R. 3583. The clerk will report the bill.

Ms. MARTER. H.R. 3583, To expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

Chairman ROYCE. Without objection, the bill is considered read.

To help expedite our consideration, I am going to go ahead and call up the bipartisan amendments previously sent to your offices and before we proceed to the opening statements so that members may speak once on the entire package.

So I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments, which members have before them, be considered en bloc—the bipartisan amendment, Number 42, in the nature of a substitute offered by Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, the author of this bill, and the Connolly Amendment, Number 100. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to follows:]

113TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3583

To expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 21, 2013

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Ms. GRANGER, and Mrs. LOWEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## A BILL

To expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Malala Yousafzai  
5 Scholarship Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-  
8 ings:

1           (1) On October 9, 2012, 15-year-old Malala  
2       Yousafzai was shot in the head by Taliban gunmen  
3       in Pakistan on her way home from school.

4           (2) When Malala was 11 years old, she bravely  
5       stood up to the Taliban and wrote a secret blog doc-  
6       umenting their crackdown on women’s rights and  
7       education in 2009.

8           (3) Malala’s advocacy for women’s education  
9       made her a target of the Taliban.

10          (4) The Taliban called Malala’s efforts to high-  
11       light the need for women’s education an “obscenity”.

12          (5) On July 12, 2013, Malala celebrated her  
13       16th birthday by delivering a speech before the  
14       United Nations General Assembly in which she said,  
15       “So let us wage a glorious struggle against illiteracy,  
16       poverty, and terrorism. Let us pick up our books  
17       and our pens. They are the most powerful weapons.  
18       One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can  
19       change the world. Education is the only solution.”.

20          (6) According to the United Nation’s 2012  
21       Education for All Global Monitoring Report, “Paki-  
22       stan has the second largest number of children out  
23       of school [in the world]” and “nearly half of rural  
24       females have never been to school.”.



1           (7) According to a Council on Foreign Rela-  
2       tions report titled “What Works in Girls’ Edu-  
3       cation”, “A 100-country study by the World Bank  
4       shows that increasing the share of women with a  
5       secondary education by 1 percent boosts annual per  
6       capita income growth by 0.3 percentage points.”.

7           (8) According to the World Bank, “The benefits  
8       of women’s education go beyond higher productivity  
9       for 50 percent of the population. More educated  
10      women also tend to be healthier, participate more in  
11      the formal labor market, earn more income, have  
12      fewer children, and provide better health care and  
13      education to their children, all of which eventually  
14      improve the well-being of all individuals and lift  
15      households out of poverty. These benefits also trans-  
16      mit across generations, as well as to their commu-  
17      nities at large.”.

18          (9) According to United Nation’s 2012 Edu-  
19      cation For All Global Monitoring Report, “education  
20      can make a big difference to women’s earnings. In  
21      Pakistan, women with a high level of literacy earned  
22      95 percent more than women with no literacy  
23      skills.”.

24          (10) In January 2010, Secretary of State Hil-  
25      lary Rodham Clinton stated, “We will open the

1 doors of education to all citizens, but especially to  
2 girls and women . . . We are doing all of these  
3 things because we have seen that when women and  
4 girls have the tools to stay healthy and the oppor-  
5 tunity to contribute to their families' well-being, they  
6 flourish and so do the people around them.”.

7 (11) The United States provides critical foreign  
8 assistance to Pakistan's education sector to improve  
9 access to and the quality of basic and higher edu-  
10 cation.

11 (12) The Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship  
12 Program administered by the United States Agency  
13 for International Development awards scholarships  
14 to academically talented, financially needy Pakistani  
15 students from remote regions of the country to pur-  
16 sue bachelor's or master's degrees at participating  
17 Pakistani universities.

18 (13) Fifty percent of the 974 Merit and Needs-  
19 Based Scholarships awarded during fiscal year 2013  
20 were awarded to Pakistani women. Historically, only  
21 25 percent of such scholarships have been awarded  
22 to women.

23 (14) The United Nations declared July 12 as  
24 “Malala Day”—a global day of support for and rec-

1      ognition of Malala’s bravery and courage in pro-  
 2      moting women’s education.

3            (15) On December 10, 2012, the United Na-  
 4      tions and the Government of Pakistan launched the  
 5      “Malala Fund for Girls’ Education” to improve  
 6      girls’ access to education worldwide, with Pakistan  
 7      donating the first \$10,000,000 to the Fund.

8            (16) More than 1,000,000 people around the  
 9      world have signed the United Nations Special Envoy  
 10     for Global Education petition calling on the Govern-  
 11     ment of Pakistan to enroll every boy and girl in pri-  
 12     mary school.

13           (17) Pakistani civil society organizations col-  
 14     lected almost 2,000,000 signatures from Pakistanis  
 15     on a petition dedicated to Malala’s cause of edu-  
 16     cation for all.

17   **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

18      (a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that—

19            (1) every individual should have the opportunity  
 20      to pursue an education;

21            (2) every individual, regardless of gender,  
 22      should have the opportunity to pursue an education  
 23      without fear of discrimination; and

24            (3) educational exchanges promote institutional  
 25      linkages between the United States and Pakistan.

1       (b) CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIA-  
2 TIVES IN PAKISTAN.—Congress encourages the Depart-  
3 ment of State and the United States Agency for Inter-  
4 national Development to continue their support for initia-  
5 tives led by the Government of Pakistan and Pakistani  
6 civil society that promote education in Pakistan, especially  
7 education for women.

8 **SEC. 4. MERIT AND NEEDS-BASED SCHOLARSHIP PRO-**  
9 **GRAM.**

10       (a) EXPANSION.—Using funding made available  
11 under section 6, the Administrator of the United States  
12 Agency for International Development (referred to in this  
13 Act as the “USAID Administrator”) shall increase the  
14 number of scholarships to women under the Merit and  
15 Needs-Based Scholarship Program (referred to in this Act  
16 as the “Program”) during each of the calendar years 2013  
17 through 2015 over the level awarded to women in calendar  
18 year 2011.

19       (b) LIMITATIONS.—

20           (1) CRITERIA.—The additional scholarships  
21 available under subsection (a) may only be awarded  
22 in accordance with other scholarship eligibility cri-  
23 teria already established by USAID.

24           (2) ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES.—Additional schol-  
25 arships authorized under subsection (a) shall be

1       awarded for a range of disciplines to improve the  
2       employability of graduates and to meet the needs of  
3       the scholarship recipients.

4           (3) OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS.—The USAID Ad-  
5       ministrator shall make every effort to award 50 per-  
6       cent of the scholarships available under the Program  
7       to Pakistani women.

8   **SEC. 5. ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING.**

9       (a) IN GENERAL.—The USAID Administrator shall  
10      designate appropriate USAID officials to brief the appro-  
11      priate congressional committees, not later than 1 year  
12      after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually  
13      thereafter for the next 3 years, on the implementation of  
14      section 4.

15      (b) CONTENTS.—The briefing described in subsection  
16      (a) shall include, among other relevant information, for  
17      the most recently concluded fiscal year—

18           (1) the total number of scholarships that were  
19           awarded through the Program, including a break-  
20           down by gender;

21           (2) the disciplines of study chosen by the schol-  
22           arship recipients;

23           (3) the percentage of the scholarships that were  
24           awarded to students seeking a bachelor's degree or  
25           a master's degree, respectively; and

1           (4) the percentage of scholarship recipients that  
2 voluntarily dropped out of school or were involun-  
3 tarily pushed out of the program for failure to meet  
4 program requirements.

5 **SEC. 6. FUNDING.**

6       Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated for fis-  
7 cal year 2014 pursuant to title I of the Enhanced Partner-  
8 ship with Pakistan Act of 2009 (22 U.S.C. 8411 et seq.),  
9 \$3,000,000 shall be made available for scholarships au-  
10 thorized under section 4(a).

○

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE  
TO H.R. 3583  
OFFERED BY MS. ROS-LEHTINEN OF FLORIDA**

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

**1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2       This Act may be cited as the “Malala Yousafzai  
3 Scholarship Act”.

**4 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5       (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-  
6 ings:

7           (1) On October 9, 2012, Malala Yousafzai was  
8       shot in the head by Pakistani Taliban gunmen on  
9       her way home from school.

10          (2) In late 2008, Malala began writing a blog  
11       for BBC Urdu under a pseudonym pressing the case  
12       for access to education for women and girls despite  
13       objections from the Pakistani Taliban.

14          (3) Malala’s advocacy for the education of  
15       women and girls made her a target of the Taliban.

16          (4) The Taliban called Malala’s efforts to high-  
17       light the need for education for women and girls an  
18       “obscenity”.

1           (5) On July 12, 2013, Malala celebrated her  
2           16th birthday by delivering a speech before the  
3           United Nations General Assembly in which she said,  
4           “So let us wage a glorious struggle against illiteracy,  
5           poverty, and terrorism. Let us pick up our books  
6           and our pens. They are the most powerful weapons.  
7           One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can  
8           change the world. Education is the only solution.”.

9           (6) According to the United Nation’s 2012  
10          Education for All Global Monitoring Report, “Paki-  
11          stan has the second largest number of children out  
12          of school [in the world]” and “nearly half of rural  
13          females have never been to school.”.

14          (7) According to the World Bank, “The benefits  
15          of women’s education go beyond higher productivity  
16          for 50 percent of the population. More educated  
17          women also tend to be healthier, participate more in  
18          the formal labor market, earn more income, have  
19          fewer children, and provide better health care and  
20          education to their children, all of which eventually  
21          improve the well-being of all individuals and lift  
22          households out of poverty. These benefits also trans-  
23          mit across generations, as well as to their commu-  
24          nities at large.”.



1           (8) According to United Nation's 2012 Edu-  
2 cation For All Global Monitoring Report, "education  
3 can make a big difference to women's earnings. In  
4 Pakistan, women with a high level of literacy earned  
5 95 percent more than women with no literacy  
6 skills."

7           (9) In January 2010, Secretary of State Hillary  
8 Rodham Clinton stated, "We will open the doors of  
9 education to all citizens, but especially to girls and  
10 women . . . We are doing all of these things because  
11 we have seen that when women and girls have the  
12 tools to stay healthy and the opportunity to con-  
13 tribute to their families" well-being, they flourish  
14 and so do the people around them.

15          (10) The United States provides critical foreign  
16 assistance to Pakistan's education sector to improve  
17 access to and the quality of basic and higher edu-  
18 cation.

19          (11) The Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship  
20 Program administered by the United States Agency  
21 for International Development (USAID) awards  
22 scholarships to academically talented, financially  
23 needy Pakistani students from all regions, including  
24 remote areas of the country, to pursue bachelor's or

1 master's degrees at participating Pakistani univer-  
2 sities.

3 (12) Fifty percent of the 974 Merit and Needs-  
4 Based Scholarships awarded during fiscal year 2013  
5 were awarded to Pakistani women. Historically, only  
6 25 percent of such scholarships have been awarded  
7 to women. Starting in the fall of 2013, USAID has  
8 committed to provide 50 percent of all scholarships  
9 to women.

10 (13) The United Nations declared July 12 as  
11 "Malala Day"—a global day of support for and rec-  
12 ognition of Malala's bravery and courage in pro-  
13 moting women's education.

14 (14) On December 10, 2012, the United Na-  
15 tions and the Government of Pakistan launched the  
16 "Malala Fund for Girls' Education" to improve  
17 girls' access to education worldwide, with Pakistan  
18 donating the first \$10,000,000 to the Fund.

19 (15) More than 1,000,000 people around the  
20 world have signed the United Nations Special Envoy  
21 for Global Education petition calling on the Govern-  
22 ment of Pakistan to enroll every boy and girl in pri-  
23 mary school.

24 (16) Pakistani civil society organizations col-  
25 lected almost 2,000,000 signatures from Pakistanis

1 on a petition dedicated to Malala’s cause of edu-  
2 cation for all.

3 (17) Engagement with Pakistani diaspora com-  
4 munities in the United States, who have unique per-  
5 spectives, access, and opportunities to contribute to  
6 stability and economic growth in Pakistan, will be a  
7 critical element of a successful United States pro-  
8 gram to promote greater access to education for  
9 women and girls.

10 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that—

12 (1) every individual should have the opportunity  
13 to pursue an education;

14 (2) every individual, regardless of gender,  
15 should have the opportunity to pursue an education  
16 without fear of discrimination; and

17 (3) educational exchanges promote institutional  
18 linkages between the United States and Pakistan.

19 (b) CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIA-  
20 TIVES IN PAKISTAN.—Congress encourages the Depart-  
21 ment of State and the United States Agency for Inter-  
22 national Development to continue their support for initia-  
23 tives led by the Government of Pakistan and Pakistani  
24 civil society that promote education in Pakistan, especially  
25 education for women.

1 **SEC. 4. MERIT AND NEEDS-BASED SCHOLARSHIP PRO-**  
2 **GRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Using funding made available  
4 under section 6, the Administrator of the United States  
5 Agency for International Development (referred to in this  
6 Act as the “USAID Administrator”) shall award at least  
7 50 percent of the number of scholarships under the Merit  
8 and Needs-Based Scholarship Program (referred to in this  
9 Act as the “Program”) to women for each of the calendar  
10 years 2014 through 2016.

11 (b) LIMITATIONS.—

12 (1) CRITERIA.—The scholarships available  
13 under subsection (a) may only be awarded in accord-  
14 ance with other scholarship eligibility criteria already  
15 established by USAID.

16 (2) ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES.—Scholarships au-  
17 thorized under subsection (a) shall be awarded for a  
18 range of disciplines to improve the employability of  
19 graduates and to meet the needs of the scholarship  
20 recipients.

21 (3) OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS.—The USAID Ad-  
22 ministrator shall make every effort to award 50 per-  
23 cent of the scholarships available under the Program  
24 to Pakistani women.

25 (c) LEVERAGING INVESTMENT.—The USAID Ad-  
26 ministrator shall, to the greatest extent practicable, con-

1 sult with and leverage investments by the Pakistani pri-  
 2 vate sector and Pakistani diaspora communities in the  
 3 United States as part of USAID's greater effort to im-  
 4 prove the quality of, expand access to, and ensure sustain-  
 5 ability of education programs in Pakistan.

6 **SEC. 5. ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The USAID Administrator shall  
 8 designate appropriate USAID officials to brief the appro-  
 9 priate congressional committees, not later than 1 year  
 10 after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually  
 11 thereafter for the next 3 years, on the implementation of  
 12 section 4.

13 (b) CONTENTS.—The briefing described in subsection  
 14 (a) shall include, among other relevant information, for  
 15 the most recently concluded fiscal year—

16 (1) the total number of scholarships that were  
 17 awarded through the Program, including a break-  
 18 down by gender;

19 (2) the disciplines of study chosen by the schol-  
 20 arship recipients;

21 (3) the percentage of the scholarships that were  
 22 awarded to students seeking a bachelor's degree or  
 23 a master's degree, respectively; and

24 (4) the percentage of scholarship recipients that  
 25 voluntarily dropped out of school or were involun-

1           tarily pushed out of the program for failure to meet  
2           program requirements.

3 **SEC. 6. FUNDING.**

4           Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated pursu-  
5 ant to title I of the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan  
6 Act of 2009 (22 U.S.C. 8411 et seq.), \$3,000,000 shall  
7 be made available for scholarships authorized under sec-  
8 tion 4(a).



**AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDMENT IN THE  
NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE TO H.R. 3583  
OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY OF VIRGINIA**

Page 7, line 23, strike “and”.

Page 8, line 2, strike the period and insert “; and”.

Page 8, beginning line 3, insert the following:

1           (5) the percentage of scholarship recipients who  
2           dropped out of school due to retaliation for seeking  
3           an education, to the extent that such information is  
4           available.



Chairman ROYCE. I now recognize myself to speak on these items.

We just heard today how even a modest investment in educating women and girls in the developing world and in areas beset by poverty and radicalism in particular, can pay long-term dividends that help stabilize societies, promote market-based economic growth,

and advance U.S. national security objectives. This is why H.R. 3583 is so important.

I want to thank Chairman Emeritus Ros-Lehtinen for her leadership on this issue. I have for years traveled to South Asia and expressed concern about the appalling state of education in places like Afghanistan and Pakistan and the subsequent rise, particularly in these Deobindi madrasas that prey upon the disenfranchised, that breed radicalism, and have been so difficult to close.

There are 600 of them in particular that are churning out a new graduating class every year that is destabilizing the region and a threat, frankly, to the hopes and aspirations of the people in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The situation for women in areas where access to education is actively suppressed is particularly grim. In Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province and in Balochistan, for example, literacy among women is between just 3 and 8 percent.

I myself had the opportunity to tour a very effective school up in the North-West Frontier some years ago. But on my following trip back I had found that the Taliban had targeted it and destroyed it. It is therefore fitting that the bill before us would be named for Malala Yousafzai, for her, because at the age of 15 she dared, of course, to defy the Taliban.

She was brutally assaulted for her efforts and ultimately inspired a generation of women and girls to demand their fundamental right to be educated. H.R. 3583 requires USAID to award at least half of the scholarships made available through the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program in Pakistan, which the United States supports, to women.

It simply provides support and policy guidance. That is the intent of this bill. I am particularly pleased that the substitute amendment contains language emphasizing the importance of consulting with and leveraging investments by the private sector and Pakistani diaspora communities in the United States, who themselves put so much of their own hard-earned money in to support education both at the medical school level and at other institutions of learning across Pakistan.

Tapping into this vast pool of expertise and resources will prove invaluable, and I thank the ranking member and Subcommittee Chairman Ros-Lehtinen both for working with me to press this point and I urge members to support the amended bill and recognize the ranking member, Mr. Eliot Engel of New York, for his remarks.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I concur with everything that you said. I am very pleased that we had this important hearing this morning and I am very proud of the role that our colleague, Mr. Keating, played, first, in bringing these hearings and then in participating in them. And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership.

Six hundred million women around the world are illiterate, nearly twice the number of men, and in rural Pakistan only one-third of women can read. These scholarships are so important. It is so important for the United States to put our money where our mouth is in helping women in Pakistan.

The overall gender disparity is even more pronounced in higher education. Only two countries of 130 measured by the 2013 Millennium Development Goals report achieved gender parity in the area and these disparities are very costly for women.

They marginalize them politically, reduce their employment opportunities, and increase their vulnerability. President Obama has said that if a country is educating its girls, if women have equal rights, that country is going to move forward. But if women are oppressed and abused and illiterate they are going to fall behind, and studies show that he is correct.

So every year of primary school boosts a girl's future wages by 10 to 20 percent, and every year of secondary school increases that earning potential by 15 to 25 percent.

The World Bank's top economist has said that financing women's education yields the highest rate of return of any investment in the developing world. These facts alone justify the efforts of the U.S. to promote female education worldwide.

A recent IMF study also found that if females were working in the same proportion as men we would see a 34-percent increase in the gross domestic product of Egypt, 27 percent in India, 9 percent in Japan, and even a 5-percent increase in the United States.

There is another compelling reason for the U.S. to support female education around the world. Educated women and girls are proven to be some of the most powerful weapons in the fight against violent extremism.

The Taliban—we all know the story—exposed their fear of educated girls when they tried to silence Malala Yousafzai. Malala's incredible example is a reminder that females are ready to lead all over the world when they have the opportunity to go to school.

When girls and women are educated they are better able to combat extremism in their roles as mothers, community members, teachers and activists and, simply put, the battle for hearts and minds cannot be won without the participation of educated women and girls.

That is why this bill that we are marking up today is so important. It is clear that there are numerous tangible benefits to educating women and girls. But we must also remember that the right to an education is a basic fundamental human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

And yet, too many young girls are still stuck working at home during the school day. Too many are still being forced out of school and into early marriages.

So we must ensure that promoting education for girls and women abroad remains a priority for the U.S. As remarkable young women like Malala have demonstrated, when education empowers women to shape their own destinies extremism is doomed.

So I am very delighted to support this legislation and support the amendments that are also being brought forth to perfect this legislation, and I am glad once again that we are doing so in a bipartisan way.

I thank Chairman Royce and everyone who has worked so hard on this legislation and make it a reality. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, and we want to thank the ranking member for his work on this legislation and amendments into the



bill. Do any other members seek recognition to speak on the pending items?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, then we will go to Mr. Connolly and then to Mr. Cicilline.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you so very much for holding this markup on this important issue. H.R. 3583 is a bipartisan measure and the House companion of Senate Bill 120, sponsored by Senator Boxer.

This bill will mandate that USAID award at least 50 percent of scholarships to women in Pakistan under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program from 2014 to 2016.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, as well as my good friend, Mr. Engel, for making the bill stronger, for making the bill more efficient, and I also would like to offer my support to the amendment offered by my good friend.

And I hear that he was a former Senate staffer—I am not sure if that is true—Mr. Connolly from Virginia, requiring USAID to look at the number of women participants who have dropped out of the program due to retaliation.

This issue is very near and dear to my heart. As one of the few women on this committee and someone with a background in education, having been a Florida-certified teacher, I know firsthand the importance of education for our youth.

We have seen that greater access to education for women leads to increased respect for human rights, a rise in prosperity and well-being, and a more peaceful and stable society.

Stories like those of Malala, who defied the brutal Taliban and became an inspiration for young people worldwide, show that education is the most important factor in empowering young girls to become successful members of society and protecting them from the ignorance that enables abuse and radicalization.

Thank you so very much, Mr. Chairman, for this markup. Thank you, Mr. Engel, as well. Thank you, sirs.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, I thank Mr. Connolly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank you and the ranking member for your leadership on this issue and for the hearing we just had—a very thoughtful hearing.

I also want to thank my good friend, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, for her leadership on this issue and her commitment, and I am particularly impressed with her perspicacity, Mr. Chairman, that she actually knows my background that I was once a—I was once a very important person.

I was a staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. But I do want to, seriously, thank all involved in this bill.

I think it is really important, as we just heard in this hearing, education is transformative. It is the key to changing the status of women. It is the key to providing opportunity, and we need to be all in when it comes to education.

So I thank my friend for accepting a slight modification in the reporting requirement to capture data about women who have been forced out of education because of retaliation, and I enthusiastically

support the bill in front of us and, again, I thank the chair and ranking member for their leadership. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Cicilline, you were seeking time.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to begin by thanking you and Ranking Member Engel for convening a markup on this important issue and for the hearing we just had, and for continuing to highlight the pressing issues of educational access, opportunity, and equality.

I also want to thank Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, our chair emeritus, for sponsoring the legislation that we are considering today and also thank and acknowledge my colleague, Congressman Keating, for his work on this issue.

Every child deserves the opportunity to obtain a quality education in the best environment possible and to be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. As we work in the United States to help provide support for qualified teachers, better technology in the classrooms, safe school literacy programs, and greater community engagement, we must not forget that we belong to a global economy.

Educated children and young people help drive the future of our economy and the future of our world.

Unfortunately, as we know, girls and women are too often left behind. And although we are making progress here in closing the achievement gap in the United States, girls and women in many parts of the world still face significant barriers to education.

In particular today, we honor Malala, who faced threats from the Taliban and ultimately a nearly deadly attack, in her relentless pursuit of an education. We must do everything we can to increase opportunities available to women and girls, especially in countries that are struggling to achieve peace and democracy.

Undoubtedly, these countries will benefit from their civic involvement and so will the world, and so I thank everyone who has worked so hard on this and I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Cicilline.

Does Ms. Frankel have an additional second-degree amendment?

Ms. FRANKEL. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there is an amendment in the—I am sorry.

Chairman ROYCE. There is. There is, and the clerk will report the amendment.

Ms. MARTER. Amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3583 offered by Ms. Frankel of Florida. At the proper place in the bill insert: "It is the sense of Congress that recipients of these scholarships commit to improving their local communities."

[The information referred to follows:]

Rep. Lois Frankel second degree amendment

Amendment to the ANS to H.R.3583

At the proper place in the bill insert:

"It is the sense of congress that recipients of these scholarships commit to improving their local communities."

Chairman ROYCE. And the Chair recognizes the author for 5 minutes to explain the amendment.

Ms. FRANKEL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I probably would have liked to do something stronger but I think this will get the point across. We heard from our very distinguished and articulate panel this morning that I think for each of them it was their opinion that these scholarships could be more effective if the recipients would pay it forward to their communities and with service and mentoring, and I think today, where our resources are so much in demand and so important and so scarce, that we have the most effective use of them.

So that is why I offer this amendment, and I hope that perhaps at a later date, and in a bipartisan manner, we can follow up with USAID with a letter or some conversations on how they could implement this.

Chairman ROYCE. I think that sounds very appropriate.

Do any other members seek recognition to speak on the amendment? Hearing no further requests for recognition, the question occurs on the amendment. All those in favor say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

All those opposed, no.

[No response.]

In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it and the amendment is agreed to.

Ms. FRANKEL. Mr. Chair, may I speak on behalf of the——

Chairman ROYCE. The overall underlying bill?

Ms. FRANKEL. Yes.

Chairman ROYCE. Very briefly.

Ms. FRANKEL. Yes.

Chairman ROYCE. All right. Then the gentlelady is granted time.

Ms. FRANKEL. I will be very brief, just say thank you. I want to thank you, the ranking member, of course, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, who I work very closely with, our great—one of our great leaders from Florida, and I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this legislation.

And just as it has been repeated again, this legislation is named after a young lady who is inspiring to all of us, and I hope that these scholarships will bring us many more Malalas into society. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman ROYCE. Well put, Ms. Frankel.

Okay. Are there any other members besides Ms. Frankel that want to speak on this amendment? Hearing no further requests for

recognition, the question occurs on the en bloc amendment. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

All those opposed, no.

[No response.]

In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it in the en bloc amendments. Ros-Lehtinen 42 and Connolly 100 and the Frankel amendment are agreed to.

The question now occurs on agreeing to House H.R. 3583 as amended. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

All those opposed, no.

[No response.]

In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it and the bill as amended is agreed to, and without objection 3583 as amended is ordered favorably reported as a single amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Staff is directed to make any technical and conforming changes and, members, that concludes our business for today, and I want to thank Ranking Member Engel and all of our committee members for their contributions and assistance to this legislation.

The committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:19 p.m. the committee was adjourned.]

## A P P E N D I X

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MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

**FULL COMMITTEE HEARING & MARKUP NOTICE**  
**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

**Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman**

April 3, 2014

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing and meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at <http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov>):

**DATE:** Thursday, April 3, 2014

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**SUBJECT:** Women's Education: Promoting Development, Countering Radicalism

**WITNESSES:** Hedieh Mirahmadi, Ph.D.  
President  
World Organization for Resource Development and Education

Ms. Humera Khan  
Executive Director  
Muflehun

Kathleen Kuehnast, Ph.D.  
Director  
Gender and Peacebuilding Center  
United States Institute of Peace

**MARKUP OF:** H.R. 3583, Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act.

**By Direction of the Chairman**

*The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.*

—

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day Thursday Date 04/03/14 Room 2172

Starting Time 10:07 a.m. Ending Time 11:57 a.m.

Recesses 0 (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_)

**Presiding Member(s)**

*Edward R. Royce, Chairman*

*Check all of the following that apply:*

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

**TITLE OF HEARING:**

*Women's Education: Promoting Development, Countering Radicalism*

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*See Attendance Sheet.*

**NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*None.*

**HEARING WITNESSES:** Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No ☐

*(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)*

**STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD:** *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

*Engel*

**TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE** \_\_\_\_\_

or

**TIME ADJOURNED** 11:57 a.m.



**Edward Burrier, Deputy Staff Director**

# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Edward R. Royce, CA
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
X	Steve Chabot, OH
	Joe Wilson, SC
	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Ted Poe, TX
	Matt Salmon, AZ
	Tom Marino, PA
	Jeff Duncan, SC
	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Mo Brooks, AL
X	Tom Cotton, AR
	Paul Cook, CA
X	George Holding, NC
X	Randy K. Weber, Sr., TX
	Scott Perry, PA
	Steve Stockman, TX
	Ron DeSantis, FL
	Doug Collins, GA
	Mark Meadows, NC
	Ted S. Yoho, FL
	Luke Messer, IN

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
	Eliot L. Engel, NY
	Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, AS
X	Brad Sherman, CA
	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
	Brian Higgins, NY
X	Karen Bass, CA
X	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI
	Alan Grayson, FL
X	Juan Vargas, CA
	Bradley S. Schneider, IL
X	Joseph P. Kennedy III, MA
X	Ami Bera, CA
	Alan S. Lowenthal, CA
X	Grace Meng, NY
X	Lois Frankel, FL
X	Tulsi Gabbard, HI
	Joaquin Castro, TX



**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP

Day Thursday Date 04/03/14 Room 2172

Starting Time 12:02 p.m. Ending Time 12:19 p.m.

Recesses 0 (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ ) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ ) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ ) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ ) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ ) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ )

**Presiding Member(s)**

*Edward R. Royce, Chairman*

*Check all of the following that apply:*

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

**BILLS FOR MARKUP:** *(Include bill number(s) and title(s) of legislation.)*

*H.R. 3583*

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*See Attendance Sheet.*

**NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*None.*

**STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD:** *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

*None.*

**ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE MARKUP:** *(Attach copies of legislation and amendments.)*

*See Markup Summary.*

**RECORDED VOTES TAKEN (FOR MARKUP):** *(Attach final vote tally sheet listing each member.)*

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Yeas</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
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TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE \_\_\_\_\_

or

TIME ADJOURNED 12:19 p.m.



**Doug Anderson, General Counsel**

# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
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	Juan Vargas, CA
	Bradley S. Schneider, IL
	Joseph P. Kennedy III, MA
	Ami Bera, CA
	Alan S. Lowenthal, CA
X	Grace Meng, NY
X	Lois Frankel, FL
	Tulsi Gabbard, HI
	Joaquin Castro, TX

**04/03/14 Foreign Affairs Committee Markup Summary**

The Chair called up H.R. 3583 (Ros-Lehtinen), “Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act” for consideration by the Committee.

By unanimous consent, two amendments (previously provided to Members of the Committee) were considered *en bloc*.


1. Ros-Lehtinen 42, an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and
2. Connolly 100, a second degree amendment to Ros-Lehtinen 42.

Rep. Frankel offered a second degree amendment, Frankel 1, to Ros-Lehtinen 42, which was agreed to by voice vote.

The *en bloc* amendments, as amended by Frankel 1, were agreed to by voice vote.

By unanimous consent, H.R. 3583, as amended, was ordered favorably reported to the House.

The Committee adjourned.



**Statement for the Record**

*Submitted by Ranking Member Eliot L. Engel*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing. And thank you to Rep. Keating who has been a big champion of this issue.

To our panelists - welcome to the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I look forward to hearing your testimony on the important role that educating women and girls plays in promoting development and combating violent extremism around the world.

Reports indicate that the global gender gap in primary education is closing. But much work remains to be done to ensure that such gains are reflected across all regions. In parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, girls continue to lag well behind boys in primary education.

The result has been that 600 million women around the world are illiterate, nearly twice the number of men. In rural Pakistan, only one third of women can read.

The overall gender disparity is even more pronounced in higher education. According to the 2013 Millennium Development Goals Report, only 2 countries of the 130 measured have achieved gender parity in this area.

These disparities are very costly for women: they marginalize them politically, reduce their employment opportunities, and increase their vulnerability. President Obama has said that if a country is "educating its girls, if women have equal rights, that country is going to move forward. But if women are oppressed and abused and illiterate, then they're going to fall behind." And studies show that he is absolutely correct.

Every year of primary school boosts a girl's future wages by 10 to 20 percent, and every year of secondary school increases that earning potential by 15 to 25 percent. The World Bank's top economist has said that financing women's education yields the highest rate of return of any investment in the developing world. These facts alone justify the efforts of the United States to promote female education worldwide.

A recent IMF study also found that if females were working in the same proportion as men, we would see a 34 percent increase in the gross domestic product of Egypt, and a 27 percent increase in India, but also a 9 percent jump in Japan and even a 5 percent increase in the U.S. This is staggering!

But there is another compelling reason for the United States to support female education around the world: educated women and girls are proving to be some of the most powerful weapons in the fight against violent extremism.

The Taliban exposed their fear of educated girls when they tried to silence Malala Yousafzai.

Malala's incredible example is a reminder that females are ready to lead all over the world when they have the opportunity to go to school. When girls and women are educated, they are better able to combat extremism in their roles as mothers, community members, teachers, and activists. Simply put: the battle for hearts and minds cannot be won without the participation of educated women and girls.

It is clear that there are numerous tangible benefits to educating women and girls. But we must also remember that the right to an education is a basic, fundamental human right, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

And yet, too many young girls are still stuck working at home during the school day. Too many are still being forced out of school and into early marriages.

We must ensure that promoting education for girls and women abroad remains a priority for the United States. As remarkable young women like Malala have demonstrated, when education empowers women to shape their own destinies, extremism is doomed.

Thank you again to Chairman Royce for holding this hearing. I'm pleased to have this opportunity to hear from our esteemed experts about their important work, and their recommendations for about how Congress can assist their efforts.